Hafa Adai!

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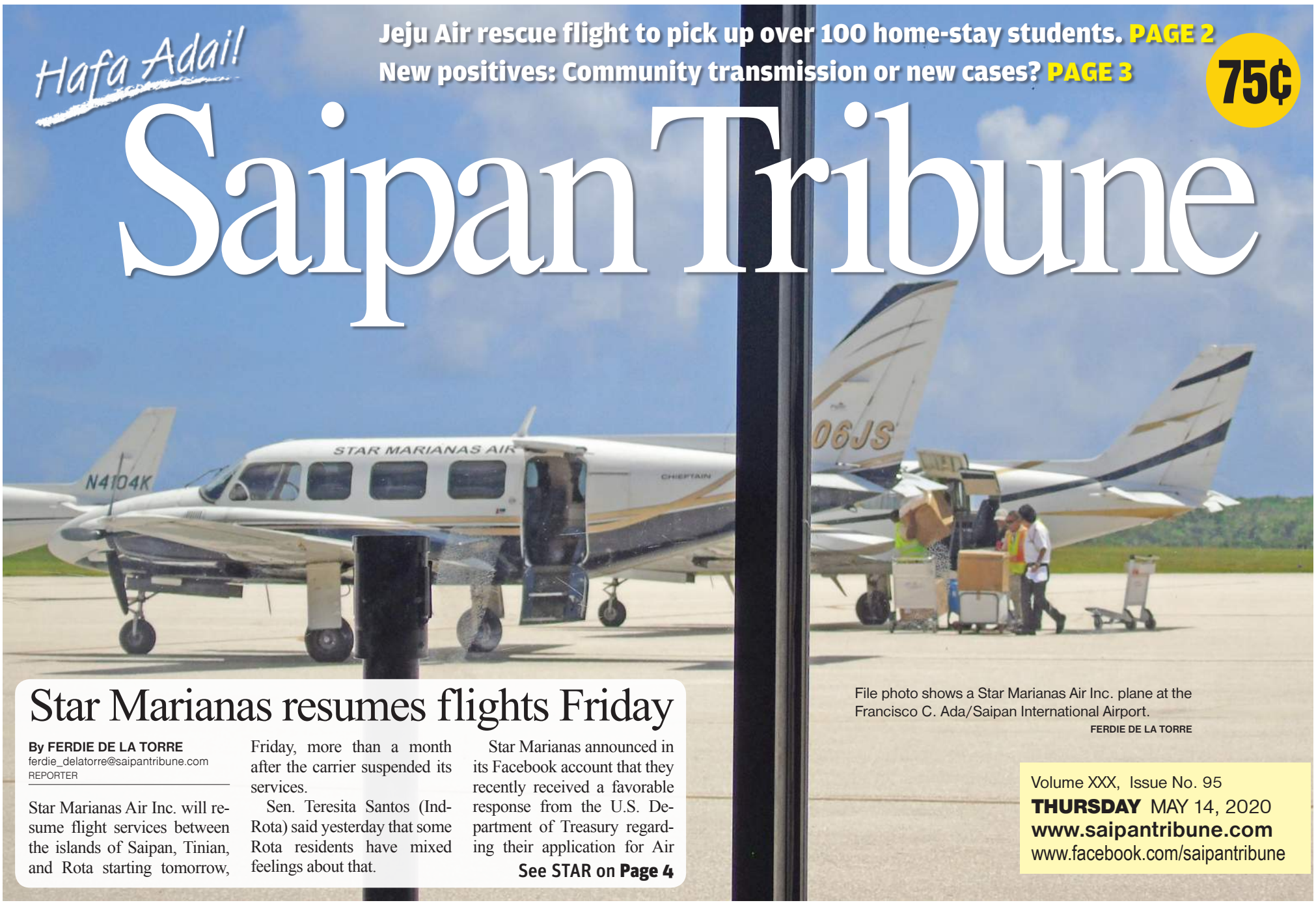
75¢

Saipan Tribune



File photo shows a Star Marianas Air Inc. plane at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Star Marianas resumes flights Friday

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Star Marianas Air Inc. will resume flight services between the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota starting tomorrow, Friday, more than a month after the carrier suspended its services.

Sen. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota) said yesterday that some Rota residents have mixed feelings about that.

Star Marianas announced in its Facebook account that they recently received a favorable response from the U.S. Department of Treasury regarding their application for Air

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$42.7M stimulus checks out

The Department of Finance announced late Tuesday its first distribution of 27,020 stimulus checks, amounting to $42,761,156.83.

According to a department statement, it said the CNMI Treasury has printed 22,306 checks to be mailed, with 813 to Rota ($1,300,862), 715 to Tinian ($1,173,889), and 20,778 to Saipan ($32,129,474). Eligibility was determined based on 2018 or 2019 tax returns.

The first batch included all eligible recipients processed without error as of Tuesday, May 12, 2020.

Additionally, with the success of the online Stimulus Portal, the department was able to submit 4,714 direct

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July 15 target to reopen CNMI to tourists

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Torres

In two months, the CNMI could be welcoming tourists back into the island.

At yesterday's unveiling of what it describes as a "community-focused" economic recovery plan for the CNMI, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres set July 15 as the projected date to reopen the Commonwealth to tourists.

"One thing for sure is that we're looking at changes along the way. … As we roll out, our business is going to be different. We ask our community to be patient, to understand that we want to open up our community, our tourism, our business partners, but we want to do it in a manner where we can all adjust to-

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AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, May 13, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	152	0	152
Recovered	124	0	124
Active	26	1	26
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	19	0	19
Recovered	12	0	12
Active	5	0	5
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			2,873

*Total includes a sailor from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt.*

Source: Joint Information Center – Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

Full pension payments resume May 30

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Full payment of the CNMI retirees' pension would resume on May 30, according to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres yesterday morning. The original intended date to resume full payments was May 15, but that had to be moved due to some challenges.

Right now, CNMI retirees are only getting 75% of their pensions but, according to the governor, he met with the leadership of the Legislature, both House Speaker Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan) and Senate President Victor B. Hocog (R-Rota), with Sen. Frank Borja (R-Saipan) of Tinian, and several other partners, to rectify this matter.

"We wanted to push for May 15," Torres said. "Unfortunately, there's some challenges that we faced, but we will be making the [full] retirement pension available starting May 30. …The retirees will be getting their [full] pension starting May 30 mov-

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Local

Jeju Air rescue flight to pick up over 100 home-stay students

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Jeju Air will fly in a rescue flight to pick up 130 to 140 passengers, mostly home-stay students, and bring them to Incheon, Seoul.

A Jeju Air staff, who agreed to speak on the condition of anonymity, confirmed yesterday that a Boeing 737-800 airplane coming from Incheon will arrive on Saipan on May 27, 2020. The staff said the plane will arrive at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport at 2:40pm and will depart on the same day at 3:40pm back to Incheon.

She said the passengers are not tourists as they are residents of Saipan who have been stuck on the island after Jeju Air suspended flights starting last March 22 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

The staff said these home-stay students, who are studying on Saipan in different schools, are now on vacation and their parents have asked them to go back to Korea for the summer break.

"They are going back home to check their family," she said.

The plane will be coming in with only two captains and four flight attendants for that rescue flight.

South Korea is the CNMI's top tourist market.

TRO against recycling center, owner is dissolved

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley M. Bogdan dissolved effective immediately his temporary restraining order that prohibits a recycling company and its owner and others from concealing or destroying all copper wires and other construction materials belonging to Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC under their possession or control.

» IPI's request to inspect recycling center's premises is denied

In an order on Monday, Bogdan also denied IPI's motion for preliminary injunction that sought to maintain the prohibition until the end of IPI's lawsuit against FSM Recycling Corp., FSMRC owner Jae Yoon Cha, FSMRC employee Eric Cruz, and a former IPI employee Ricky Reyes.

Bogdan also denied IPI's request to be allowed to inspect FSMRC's premises in Tanapag.

IPI, through Robert O'Connor, is suing FSMRC, Cha, Cruz, Reyes, and 15 unnamed co-defendants for allegedly conspiring to steal and sell construction materials stolen from IPI's warehouses.

IPI asked the court to hold the defendants liable to pay punitive damages in excess of $50,000 and other damages, in an amount to be proven at trial.

FSMRC, Cha, and Cruz, through Robert T. Torres, countersued IPI for invasion of privacy/false light, and abuse of process. In addition, FSMRC, Cha, and Cruz are suing IPI for business disparagement. They also filed a crossclaim for defamation against Reyes and 15 unnamed persons.

Reyes allegedly prepared a handwritten statement early this year that he and another man cut about 10 feet of copper wire from spools owned by IPI and sold the wire to Cha and FSMRC.

Bogdan held a hearing last April 23 via telephonic conference on IPI's motion for preliminary injunction against the defendants following his issuance of a TRO. The judge issued the TRO last April 16.

Present at the hearing were attorney Cong Nie, on behalf of the O'Connor law firm, and Torres. Reyes appeared without a counsel. Also present were witnesses prepared to testify. The parties have withdrawn subpoenas for documents that were to be produced at the hearing.

Torres

Bogdan

In his order Monday, Bogdan said he has reviewed the file, including the answer to the lawsuit, counterclaims and crossclaim, as well as exhibits of record. Bogdan said all witnesses under subpoena to testify for this proceeding are discharged and released.

"Further proceedings in this matter will proceed as warranted under the Commonwealth's Rules of Civil Procedure," the judge said.

Torres said yesterday that FSM Recycling is pleased with the court's order, "which speaks for itself." Torres said the complaint is without basis and FSM has responded to the complaint as to IPI's baseless claim.

He disclosed that FSM has filed its criminal complaint with the Department of Public Safety to investigate the person who admitted stealing from IPI and, as recently as Monday, met with DPS detectives to cooperate with the investigation.

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Engineering & Security

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- Salary Range: $8.33/ Hourly
- Job Duties:
  - Perform Routine preventative maintenance to ensure that machines continue to run smoothly, building systems operate efficiently, or the physical condition of building does not deteriorate.
- Qualification Requirements:
  - High School diploma or equivalent
  - 2 years work experience related to General Maintenance

- Position: Security Guard
- Location: Chalan Pale Arnold Main Road, San Roque
- Openings: 3
- Full or Part Time: Full Time
- Salary Range: $8.00/ Hourly
- Job Duties:
  - Inspecting and patrolling hotel premises and/or employing housing regularly, perform daily inspections on all employees at hotel premises and/or employee housing, providing daily written reports on a daily basis, adhering to company policies and legal regulations
- Qualification Requirements:
  - High School diploma or equivalent
  - 12 months work experiences related to Security Guard/Safety

Interested applicants can apply with Micronesia Resort Inc. dba: Kensington Hotel Saipan via walk-in at San Roque, Monday – Friday, 8:00AM – 5:00PM except for holiday or submit resume via email at hr@mrisaipan.com or Interested applicant may contact Human Resources Office at telephone no. 670-237-4557/4505.

Kensington offers exceptional benefits for Full and Part Time associates. Benefits may include Paid Time Off, Holiday Pay, Premium Pay for Night Shift, Duty Meal, Hotel Discounts, Optional Basic Health Insurance and Optional Dormitory Accomodations.

SAIPAN KENSINGTON HOTEL

Navy Seabees help Tinian fight wild brush fires

Equipment Operator 2nd Class Scott Valente, assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 5, Detail Tinian, and from Ramona, California, removes power-line poles obstructing Tinian's fire department access to the road using a CAT 924-G front-end loader as part of a defense support of civilian authorities' action.

U.S. NAVY/ENGINEERING AIDE 2ND CLASS YOHANES NUGUSE

TINIAN—U.S. Navy Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 5 assisted in the preventative and reactionary support of quelling local brush fires on Tinian from May 9 to May 11.

As the brush fires spread throughout the 40-square-mile island, Seabees from NMCB-5 demonstrated support capabilities.

Lt. Patrick Daniele, NMCB-5's Detail Tinian officer in charge, contacted the fire department and asked how they could help. The Seabees immediately arrived on site to provide Tinian's Fire Department with 2,000 gallons of water to control the fire and coordinated future support.

Brush fires are common to the CNMI during the dry season, which is December to June. All local fires are given names, and since the Seabees fought the fires the local fire department declared the Seabees with NMCB-5 as "Dragon Slayers" for their rapid response and support with the fires.

"I think the Seabees are a vital part of our nation's deterrence against war," said Gus Dosalua, Tinian firefighter. "[The Seabees] are also a vital resource to communities such as ours in times of disasters and emergencies that we can't handle ourselves."

Equipment operators worked with the fire department and other components of the civil service on the island using an MK28C water truck to aid in putting out the fire. The truck had a 2,000-gallon capacity to transport water to locations where fire hydrants were not available. Seabees were able to decrease the turnaround time of refilling fire engine so firefighters could stay on top of the fight.

On May 10 and May 11, the Seabees used CAT 924-G front-end loader to clear burned and downed power line poles which were obstructing roads and preventing firefighters from accessing local farms and ongoing fires. On another occasion, they spread fresh dirt covering a 500-foot span along a divided road to smother the fire and prevent it from spreading to an adjacent farm.

"It's always nice and fulfilling to be able to help the community using our training," said Equipment Operator 2nd Class Scott Valente, from Ramona, California, deployed with NMCB-5.

NMCB-5 is deployed across the Indo-Pacific region conducting high-quality construction to support U.S. and partner nations to strengthen partnerships, deter aggression, and enable expeditionary logistics and naval power projection. The battalion stands ready to support Humanitarian Aid/Disaster Relief and Major Combat Operations throughout the region. ***(Engineering Aide 2nd Class Yohanes Nuguse)***

New positives: Community transmission or new cases?

It is still unclear how the three new positive cases in the CNMI contracted the virus and whether these cases of COVID-19 had the virus but have since then recovered or just new cases.

What is known, press secretary Kevin Bautista said, is that the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., through contact tracing, were able to identify individuals who have been in contact with people who have contracted COVID-19.

The three male individuals were confirmed positive for COVID-19 last May 10 after going through the mass testing being done at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

"Initially the first cluster of cases were linked to one cluster, and we were able to do the contact tracing accordingly," said Bautista. "The biggest thing for us is that knowing that this is just another proof of community transmission."

Bautista stated that the most important thing to remember is that the virus is here, and that anyone could have it. This is why Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, and CHCC emphasizes that the community should keep in mind all the rules about proper hygiene, social distancing, and wearing a mask when you're out, not only to protect yourself but everyone else as well.

In talking about his experience during the specimen collection at the Saipan airport, Torres said that there was "slight discomfort."

"My daughters and sons did it. My wife did it. We are encouraging all the government employees and all our private partners to do the testing," he said. "For what it is worth, there's no pain on what you are saving—whether you are saving your family or someone else's family."

He said the more people take part in the community-based testing, "the better we are in knowing where we at."

The three new patients, whose age ranges from 19 to 27 years old, are all asymptomatic which means that they have no symptoms such as coughing, dry throat, and loss of smell and taste.

According to Bautista, based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention observations, cases that are asymptomatic have immune systems that aren't as compromised as senior citizens and individuals with pre-existing conditions.

"For individuals…who are younger, we could be the carriers of the virus and we don't want to spread that over to individuals who are most vulnerable to it," said Bautista.

Additionally, the three, together with two previously identified cases, are at the Alternative Care Site at Kanoa Resort in Susupe and are getting checked twice a day, getting their temperature reading and getting fed three times a day for the next 14 days that they are at the isolation site. After the quarantine period, they will then be retested and, only when they test negative would they be declared "fully recovered," Bautista said.

To date, the CNMI has 19 confirmed COVID-19 cases, with 12 recoveries, two deaths, and five active cases.

In Guam, its Department of Public Health and Social Services tested 64 individuals for COVID-19 yesterday and nobody tested positive. To date, there have been 152 cases confirmed through COVID-19 testing provided with 5 deaths and 124 released from isolation. When a patient is released from isolation, he or she is no longer considered infectious. DPHSS uses CDC's test-based criteria for releasing patients from isolation. ***(Justine Nauta)***

PSS to 'unfurlough' essential employees

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the funds the Public School System expects to get through the CARES Act, it is working on bringing back a handful of furloughed employees for training for the upcoming school year.

In a phone interview with Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, he said the PSS administration has decided to bring back essential employees who need to undergo social and emotional training for school year 2020-2021.

The move would have to be approved by the Board of Education. "Hopefully, upon approval of the board, we [can] bring back all the necessary employees, or the essential employees, back up, 'unfurlough' them, and begin the social and emotional training in July," he said.

Essential employees include teacher and instructors, as well as employees who deal with students one-on-one. Ada said they expect over 500 employees.

"As we open the schools, we need put in the forefront the social and emotional learning curriculum that addresses the trauma so our students will be able to understand what's going on. We need to train over 500 staff and personnel," he said.

On top of social and emotional training, PSS will also pay teacher' summer pay through the CARES Act funding.

"We still have to pay our teachers the summer pay, $9 million. We have to pay them throughout the summer. They are all on a 190-day contract and because they were all on admin[istrative] leave, I have to pay that. Their summer pay is part of their contract. If they served this school year, they must be given summer pay. Despite COVID-19 and having to shut down schools, I still need to pay them their summer pay," he said.

PSS assures employees that their priority is to pay teachers their owed salaries before the summer pay and emotional training for teachers.

"We will take care of all our obligations to our teachers first, and then we will start the training for all our teachers on remote learning," he said.

PSS is expected to receive over $22 million from the CARES Act.

Labor: Health insurance benefits no bearing on PUA and FPUC programs

The CNMI Department of Labor was notified that some employers are cancelling health insurance benefits to ensure employees with partial earnings qualify for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation programs. These actions are not recommended or approved by CNMI DOL.

Generally, to be eligible for PUA and FPUC, an individual's employment must be affected as a direct result of COVID-19. Any partial earnings must be reported and deducted from the eligible individual's benefit amount. Pursuant to applicable law and Executive Order No. 2020-09, CNMI DOL will apply Hawaii Employment Security law to assess partial earnings.

Health insurance is considered a "benefit" or "perk" of employment. Health insurance does not count toward income or wages and has no bearing on eligibility under the PUA and FPUC programs. The department cautions employers against breaching employment contracts, violating employer responsibilities for CW-1 workers, and taking any action that may be investigated as fraud for unemployment benefits. ***(PR)***

IT&E: Sham calls part of larger scam affecting US

The bout of suspicious calls the CNMI is experiencing is part of a larger scam affecting the United States, according to IT&E yesterday.

It said it reported the suspicious calls to AT&T, which is investigating. IT&E has received information from the AT&T Fraud Desk that the calls are part of a Chinese Consulate robocalling/spoofing scam that is also circulating in the U.S. and has defrauded people of millions of dollars. Fraudsters pose as the Chinese Consulate requesting payment to deliver a package. They ask for bank account or credit card numbers. They may also ask for money to be transferred to them.

"We've been told that AT&T will be taking action to stop the calls. They'll continue to update us as the situation develops. Again, the source of these calls is outside of the CNMI and Guam and we remind the community to be cautious of calls from unknown numbers," said IT&E general manager Rose Soledad.

The fraudsters use call spoofing to replicate local phone numbers that appear on caller ID and hide the actual phone number; they hide their actual number and call local users with auto dialers.

To avoid phone scams, IT&E recommends not answering calls from unknown numbers and to hang up immediately if such a call is answered. Never share personal information over the phone.

Subscribers with concerns or that would like to report a suspicious call can reach the IT&E Customer Care Center at 682-4483 or visit www.ite.net to send a message. ***(PR)***

STAR

From Page 1

Carrier Workers Support under the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act, the federal law that outlines relief efforts nationwide

Star Marianas said that, as a precondition to be eligible for this program, airlines must operate scheduled flights to destinations served prior to March 1, 2020. In order to be in compliance with this federal requirement, Star Marianas said they will resume limited scheduled passenger operations from Saipan to Tinian and Saipan to Rota starting tomorrow, Friday.

Star Marianas said the health and wellbeing of their passengers and crew members is their top priority and, with that in mind, all passengers are being asked to wear masks at all times when flying with them.

"We would also like our customers to know that we are making every effort to provide a safe and healthy flying experience and have implemented regular sanitation of our aircraft's frequently touched surfaces," Star Marianas said.

Santos said that, since COVID-19 testing is not mandatory nor obtaining clearances prior to boarding is, the no-mask, no-entry rule and social distancing policys must be implemented and fully enforced when checking in, and waiting for departure at the commuter airport. This no-mask, no-entry rule should also apply when boarding and sitting in the airplane, she said.

Rota currently has no COVID-19 case.

The senator recommends that Star Marianas disinfect or sanitize its aircraft before and after use. She said information has been received that incoming passengers will be monitored through an alert information sheet.

Santos said the Rota Health Center will soon be holding community-based testing for COVID-19 for the people of Rota. Although there is no quarantine facility on Rota, she said that COVID-19 Task Force chair Warren Villagomez has indicated there is already a standing protocol in the event of a positive case.

"But we pray not to have any, that our people are free from this virus and a cure is made available at the earliest," Santos said.

Star Marianas suspended its flights between Saipan, Tinian, and Rota starting last April 2, but continued to provide 24-hour emergency flight services for patient transfers and other transportation needs to support control efforts in the fight against the COVID-19 virus. It also continued to provide interisland air cargo services between the CNMI and Guam.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig, and Tinian Mayor Edwin Santos had requested Star Marianas Air to suspend the scheduled passenger flights between Saipan and Tinian and Saipan and Rota to help control the spread of the virus.

Last May 2, United Airlines resumed their Guam-Saipan flights after a month of suspending air services.

STIMULUS

From Page 1

deposits for taxpayers who submitted valid bank information. The portal will reopen within the week for those that were not processed in the first batch and who would like to submit their information. A public announcement will be made regarding the reopening of the stimulus portal. It will be closed 48 hours prior to the next batch upload. More details on this will be provided later this week.

"Due to the high volume of applications for direct deposit, Finance had to shut down the stimulus portal earlier than anticipated, but taxpayers should not be alarmed or worried. The portal will reopen for direct deposit. If you choose not to do direct deposit, you will receive a paper check in the mail," said Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig.

Saipan Tribune archives state that the stimulus checks will provide up to $1,200 for each eligible individual and $2,400 for joint returns, as well as $500 for each qualifying child.

Future disbursements will be processed on a weekly basis, with expected disbursements on Fridays, beginning on May 22, 2020.

The Division of Revenue & Taxation is working diligently to enter all tax returns as they are received, so that these taxpayers will be included in the subsequent stimulus check releases.

According to DRT director Tracy B. Norita, eligible recipients are advised to allow for two weeks for the DRT to process the additional round of stimulus checks, as well as delivery of mail by the U.S. Postal Service for those that do not choose direct deposit. A request will be made to the Internal Revenue Service for additional funds. Funds will be transferred upon approval by U.S. Treasury.

Norita also provided clarification regarding Social Security beneficiaries and SSI recipients. "The U.S. Treasury had made the final decision for all U.S. territories to issue stimulus checks through the local tax office. In discussions with the IRS, we shared our concerns for our most vulnerable citizens and insisted they reconsider, but with no success. In order to get these checks out to our people in the shortest amount of time, we had to concede and accept the terms of the proposed implementation plan. Therefore, Social Security beneficiaries and SSI recipients must file their 2019 income tax to avail of the stimulus," said Norita. ***(PR)***

FULL

From Page 1

ing forward."

The CNMI retirees stopped receiving their full pension payments last April 15, after government funds got restricted following the lawsuit filed by the Public School System, demanding 25% of general funds, mandated by the CNMI Constitution, causing the 25% cut in the retirees' pension.

PSS was recently awarded $22.3 million from the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act, on top of the $5.58 million funding allocation from the U.S. Department of Education.

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said the administration is happy and delighted that PSS was included in the CARES Act. "We went through a lot of trials and tribulations, back and forth retirement issue, PSS funding, and all that…but, with the CARES Act and the resources that were made available to our school system, we're very, very happy that we've gone past that issue of fighting each other over who's going to get paid and who's not going to get paid," he added.

The lieutenant governor also said that the administration is confident that the PSS board and management will ensure that the funds are administered and managed appropriately.

Torres and Palacios also extended their appreciation to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) for his work in the U.S. Congress in securing allocations for the CNMI.

"There's also another person that certainly, we need to give a lot of credit to, and that is our Congressman Kilili, who works in Congress to make sure that when certain resources become available through congressional process, he makes sure that the CNMI is also included, and is taken care of," Palacios said.

As for retirees asking if they would retroactively get their 25% unpaid pension for April, Hocog said in his social media account, "We are all working together to make those unpaid pension happen," and that the "Secretary of Finance will work out ways with the Settlement Fund" to address the concern.

Saipan Chamber of Commerce board member Alex Sablan talks about the community-focused economic recovery plan for the CNMI, asking for businesses to cooperate in implementing measures that would ensure the safety and protection of both their staff and customers, as the CNMI targets to reopen to tourists on July 15. IVA MAURIN

JULY

From Page 1

gether," Torres said.

The plan, prepared through the Governor's COVID-19 Economic Task Force, with the Marianas Visitors Authority, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, and business leaders in the CNMI, outlines a phased approach toward resuming economic activity in the CNMI, while still ensuring the public's safety.

Reopening the CNMI back to tourists means calibrating the way in which businesses operate on the islands, from the strict enforcement of social distancing and hygiene protocols, to installation of thermal scanners in large entrances, to ensure everyone's protection and safety.

Another key component is the mass testing being administered by the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. According to CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña, surveillance, and knowing the real number of COVID-19 cases in the community, is significant if the CNMI is to open and start lifting the antivirus measures that are now in place.

"The numbers are important. We need to know who's infected, and also look at the percentage of the positives...and right now we are getting to that...bringing that confidence for you and for the customers that you serve, and the people here in the community, and the visitors that are going to come here," she added.

To reopen safely, CHCC needs to be confident with the numbers, Muña said. To date, CHCC has collected almost 3,000 specimens through the community-based testing. The CNMI has an estimated population of 50,000.

Semblance of safety

The plan provides for how businesses can mitigate the risks, and limit the spread of COVID-19, as their operations resume. This include requiring customers and employees to wear masks, the encouragement of testing throughout the workplace and community networks, and connecting onsite monitoring with health care mitigation and quarantine procedures.

It also includes guidance and requirements, such as putting limitations on occupancy and distance between individuals, strict implementation of social distancing through 6-foot increment marking wherever lines form at business premises.

It also includes posting of signs, avoiding physical contact, thermal monitoring, providing sanitizers, and developing policies for the identification and isolation of sick staff and customers.

Saipan Chamber of Commerce board member Alex Sablan said the point is to ensure that all these mitigation measures are in place in order for everyone to feel safe.

"We are going to ask that we put in a rigid process so that we ensure everybody remains relatively safe, whether they are within their own homes but also within the community. …We look toward the July 15 timeline in opening up the economy to tourism once we have all of these protocols…laid out," he added.

The group is looking at a grant to put some cost mechanism in place that will require origin testing for tourists leaving their country and origin testing upon arrival in the Commonwealth.

"As every jurisdiction in the United States and around the world is doing, we're all trying to get our economies going so people can be gainfully employed, and our people can get back to work," he added.

The new norm

According to Sablan, the new norm is going to include continued social distancing and limited occupancy within businesses that will be able to open up. Businesses are being asked to cooperate, particularly since the group is looking into mandating thermal imaging within large business corridors within public spaces, and a monitoring process to be put in place.

"We're talking about asking people to take temperatures at doorways, provide hand sanitizer, sanitizing facilities, surface sanitizing at all times…that's going to be [the] continued norm. …We're going to be inconvenienced. We're going to have to add costs, but we have to put some semblance of safety, the safety net in place, for our people on the ground," he said.

"We are going to be looking at increasing the cost and inconvenience to some of these businesses, but again in consideration, it's a small price to pay to save the community," he added.

July 15 is a proposed date only and it may still be changed, depending on public health recommendations of CHCC.

The quest to reopen the CNMI

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With just five active COVID-19 cases in the Commonwealth at the moment, talks about lifting some of the emergency directives that the CNMI government is implementing, along with the reopening of businesses, are getting some traction.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres disclosed in an interview that the government is currently in discussions with the private sector on measures that need to be in place to safely reopen businesses on the islands.

"We want to slowly bring back our economy and slowly open up our businesses but, at the same time, continue the social distancing, continue proper hygiene. It has been a couple of months now or so, but we still need to continue this effort," he said.

With the community strictly following the directives on social distancing and proper hygiene, the CNMI has managed to keep its COVID-19 cases to a low 19, with 12 recoveries, in relation to the islands' over 50,000 residents.

The governor said that they are working with the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, as well as the members of his Cabinet, on how to bring back and start opening up not just the private sector but also the government.

Earlier, Torres stated that he is encouraging government employees, especially those who work in direct contact with the public, to be tested for COVID-19, for the safety of the community. Majority of his Cabinet members already got tested last week, with a few waiting to get tested within the week.

Reopening for tourists?

While United Airline flights have resumed, bringing residents back to the CNMI, Torres said that they are working with the Marianas Visitors Authority since more issues still need to be addressed as far as bringing in tourists from other countries go.

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced a barrage of concerns connected to traveling, not just health but also safety and sanitation.

Torres

"This is a whole new way of traveling, and this is a whole new world of how to…enjoy a tourist destination like Saipan. …It's not going to be the normal opening up the [hotels] because there's a lot of health issues that have to be addressed, so we're working on that," he added.

The governor also mentioned regulations for those wanting to visit the CNMI. "[For] our tourists, are there additional regulations that need to be in place for them? Is their health declaration all that we need for them to be received here, or do we need to do additional testing while they're here? These are a reality on what we have to implement here on our islands," Torres said.

The governor said that these are issues that need to be addressed before reopening the CNMI to tourists, stressing that since tourists deal with the community, whether at the hotel, through tour agents, or in businesses, such a decision involves the community.

"Opening up our government, opening up our private sector is one thing, [but] when we start opening up our tourist destination, that's another issue that we all as a community need to embrace," he said.

EARTHQUAKE ROUNDUP

Farallon de Pajaros

At 12:15am on May 05, 2020, a report of a 4.9-magnitude earthquake occurred 91 kilometers southeast of Farallon de Pajaros in the Northern Mariana Islands. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

Merizo, Guam

At 8:48pm on May 8 2020, a report of a 5.2-magnitude earthquake occurred 126 kilometers south-southwest of Merizo village in Guam. Currently, no tsunami warnings or advisories are issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***

DoD: CNMI is on top of COVID-19 response

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI is on top of its COVID-19 response, according to a U.S. Department of Defense official who is on island to help beef up the Commonwealth's efforts in fighting the pandemic.

Coordinating officer Harry Elliott, who is leading a U.S. Department of Defense team in strengthening the capability of Kanoa Resort as an alternate care site, stressed the "absolutely outstanding" partnership between the DoD and the Commonwealth in this effort.

"In peacetime, we work together to make sure that our forces are trained to protect all Americans, including the folks here in the CNMI, and it's really important that we're able to do that. But, we're also here, the military is also here, in times of crisis, to be able to help our fellow Americans," he added.

DoD flown in nine medical professionals to the CNMI—five nurses, one biochemist, one microbiologist, and three lab technicians—all providing support to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. DoD is also working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"In addition to myself, I have an Army lieutenant colonel, and an Army major to support the planning efforts. We work for United States Indo-Pacific Command and support of Adm. [John] Menoni, back in Guam, at the Task Force West, and we are all committed to bringing forces here in the event they're needed," said Elliott.

According to Elliott, the DoD has forces on the ground, integrated with CHCC, making plans that "they hope to never have to execute," and they are ready should additional medical providers be required.

"We will be ready to bring those forces here, and watching how strong the team here in the CNMI, how well the response has gone, how serious the public is taking this. It's really impressive," he said.

"I can tell you that, from my observation, there's not a jurisdiction in the United States that is doing it as good or better than the CNMI. The CNMI is really at the top. You can see that in how few cases there are, you can see that in how few fatalities have been, so it's important that we continue to take this seriously," he added.

Elliott, a proud resident of the Marianas himself, lauded the partnerships formed in the CNMI.

"We, in the military, are so grateful for how welcoming, and how cooperative, the people of the CNMI are, and when the crisis has come, we are proud and glad to be able to come and support," he said.

PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB SAIPAN

We are seeking for high energy individuals with a positive, can do attitude.
Pacific Islands Club, Saipan is inviting qualified, U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

GUEST RELATIONS (3)
High School Diploma is required. Two years of work experience in Concierge or Customer Service in hotel industry. Proficient in languages of Korean or Chinese or Russian is required due to the demographic of visitors/tourist to Saipan.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE (7)
Must have a High School diploma or equivalent. No more than 24 months of work experience as building maintenance. Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays. Must be able to lift up to 50lbs regularly. Safely climb ladders while carrying up to 40lbs. Able to stand, walk, sit, climb or balance, stoop, crawl kneel work at height up to 100 feet. Work under extreme weather condition s. Solid understand of technical aspects of plumbing, carpentry, electrical systems. Official apprenticeship preferred.

ACCOUNTING SUPERVISOR (1)
Bachelor's degree in Accounting. 48 months of work experience. Strong knowledge of Excel and Word and must be knowledgeable in using Opera (Property Management System), Micros Symphony, MAS 90 (integrating the General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Purchase Order, and Inventory Management modules) and Online Bank Business Connection (WebCash Management System).

BAKER (3)
High School Diploma is required. 6 months of work experience. Knowledge and experience in hotel/resort as baker is an advantage, Must be able to work flexible hours including weekends and holidays. The employee must regularly lift and/or move up to 10-25 pounds. Apprenticeship from recognized technical school preferred.

BARTENDER (3)
High School Diploma is required. Possess a strong knowledge in service standards, guest relations an etiquette. At least 12 months experience, must be over 21 years old. Must be able to work flexible shifts (weekends, holidays, night and days) able to stand long periods of time.

COOK (17)
High School Diploma is required. Knowledge and experience in hotel/resort as a cook is an advantage. 12 months' work experience. Must be able to lift and/or move up to 10-25 pounds. Must be able to work flexible shifts, weekends and holidays.

F&B SUPERVISOR (9)
High School diploma. No more than 12 months' experience in supervisory level. Able to work weekends, holiday and flexible shifts.

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER (1)
• Bachelor's degree in Accounting • CPA license preferred • 5 - 7 years of accounting experience • Solid working knowledge of accounting principles and financial statement presentation • Well organized with strong attention to detail • Proficient with technology • Strong written and verbal communication skills • Experience within hospitality or similar industry

Applications must be received by 5:00pm on Friday, May 15th, 2020.
PIC applications are available at the PIC Security Desk by the Loading Dock/Employee Entrance.
Incomplete applications will NOT be accepted or considered.
PIC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB SAIPAN

NOW HIRING

BUILDING MAINTENANCE
LANDSCAPER/GARDENER

Did your company close?
Are you looking for a temporary full-time job?

APPLY NOW

Pick-up an application from the Security Office
located at PIC's loading dock (must wear a mask & gloves to enter)
or e-mail your resume to jennifer.delacruz@picsaipan.com

Must be able to legally work in the CNMI (Saipan)
without needing a work visa.
For inquiries please contact the Human Resources Office
at (670) 234-7976

Kilili: $2.9B eyed for NMI in Democrats' next relief act

The Marianas would receive over $2.9 billion to deal with the health and economic crisis caused by the coronavirus in the relief act Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives released yesterday and plan to pass on Friday. Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) said that much of what he asked for—direct aid to schools and the Commonwealth government, continued relief for individuals and households, and CIP funding—has been included in the bill.

The Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions, or HEROES, Act also includes tighter timelines for getting money to those in need. "It is great to see that $42 million in recovery rebates is finally being paid out in the Marianas," Sablan said. "But almost two months after passage of our last big relief measure, the CARES Act, those unemployed in the Marianas still cannot apply for help, much less get the $940 weekly benefit that Congress provided. That is why I asked for more statutory deadlines that federal and local governments have to meet for distributing money from the HEROES Act."

Like House members everywhere, Sablan has been conferencing on hours-long Democratic caucus meetings and small-group issue forums during drafting of the bill. He said he was grateful to Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Appropriations chair Nita Lowey, key architects of the HEROES Act, for never forgetting the Marianas and other non-state areas and for the generosity of their action.

"$2.9 billion is triple the Marianas' gross domestic product in the best year," Sablan said. "It is as much as the Commonwealth has received from the federal government since our beginning.

"This is a lot of money. But we face a very, very long road to recovery," he warned. "The Commonwealth will have to use this money in the wisest way possible; or we will not recover."

He also cautioned that the Democratic proposal itself faces a long road to enactment. "Republicans in the House and the Senate have already said the HEROES Act is 'dead on arrival.' And the Trump administration has paused its talks with Congress on any further relief. The President is hoping we will all reopen our economies over the coming weeks and the coronavirus just disappears."

Lost revenue

A key goal for Sablan in this round of legislation was to replace lost revenue to the Commonwealth government as a result of the abrupt end of tourism in January as the coronavirus struck China, Korea, and other tourist markets. The drop in revenues forced cuts to retirees, teachers, and essential services.

The HEROES Act sets aside $20 billion for the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Within 30 days of enactment the Marianas would receive $2.14 billion.

Sablan also asked for more funding for schools, along with his bipartisan Pacific Delegate colleagues, in their joint request to leadership on April 14. The CARES Act provided $27,940,945 for Marianas education, money that Education Assistant Secretary Frank Brogan promised Sablan would be wire-transferred this week.

Now, the HEROES Act proposes an estimated $81 million for Marianas schools from an education stabilization fund. "The CARES Act money should replace what the Commonwealth budgeted for education this year, but has failed to pay," Sablan said. "The education stabilization funds alone could cover all of the next school year for PSS, NMC, and NMTI. And there is additional money in the HEROES Act just for colleges, which Northern Marianas College will also qualify for.

"Education has always been my No. 1 priority, making sure teachers get paid and students can continue learning, even in the middle of a global pandemic, I still believe is the best way to ensure that we have a bright future."

The HEROES Act also includes monies for county-level governments, like the Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Northern Islands municipalities. "One problem with putting so much money in the hands of governors," Sablan said, "it does not always trickle down to where it is needed. So we are making sure that local governments, which provide many public services, get relief, too, just as we do for schools."

Assistance

Individuals and families are not left out of the Democrats relief act. Pandemic unemployment assistance of about $340 weekly in the Marianas for those who lost work because of the coronavirus would continue through the end of January 2021, along with the additional $600 weekly being paid nationwide. Altogether CARES Act and HEROES Act unemployment benefits could put $350 million into the Marianas economy.

The HEROES Act also includes a second round of recovery rebates of $1,200 for individuals and $2,400 for joint tax-filers that began in the CARES Act and is now being paid out in the Marianas. Up to three dependent children would qualify for $1,200 each, an increase from the $500 benefit in the CARES Act. And, retroactively, all dependents, including full-time students below age 24, become eligible for the CARES Act credit, as do those who use an individual taxpayer identification number and not a social security number. Both changes Sablan advocated for.

"As I wrote in my formal request to leadership, in the long-term, direct cash aid to individuals encourages taxable consumption and taxable employment. For that reason, putting money directly in peoples' pockets is more economically efficient than giving money to state and territorial governments, even if we have to give to governments just to get through the immediate crisis," he said.

Sablan is one of over one hundred members of the House and Senate who asked leadership to include a guaranteed income provision in the HEROES Act with recurring monthly direct payments to low-income households. "That simple program could replace unemployment, and food stamps, and the other patchwork of aid," Sablan said. "It would be much easier for the government to administer and much easier for those we want to help to get their money." At least for now, that proposal is not in the HEROES Act.

The Earned Income Tax Credit, one of Sablan's long-standing goals for lower income households, did make it into the bill, however. Taxpayers can use the credit to offset what they owe; or if they owe less than the amount of the credit, they get a cash refund. The federal government will cover the cost of the EITC in the Marianas. Sablan first started working on this legislative action in 2015 with his bill, H.R. 4309.

The HEROES Act also makes the child tax credit fully refundable for 2020 and increases the amount to $3,000 per child up to age 17, or $3,600 for a child under age 6. The Act provides about $30 million to help cash-strapped Marianas families with the costs of water and other utilities and for homeowner expenses, such as mortgage payments and insurance. And $1.82 million is set aside specifically for the Marianas Nutrition Assistance Program.

A third key ask

Sablan and the Pacific area delegates also requested funding for critical infrastructure, in particular linking water and sewage infrastructure to public health. Leadership listened. The HEROES Act contains $945 million for capital improvement projects in the insular areas. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that $1.05 billion is necessary over the next 20 years to bring water infrastructure in the Marianas, American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands up to par.

"This is the scale of funding we wanted," Sablan said. "First-world water infrastructure is absolutely necessary to keep everyone healthy and to rebuild our tourism economy.

"Some funding will also need to go to the hospital and other facilities that provide direct care," he added.

The HEROES Act also sets aside $55 million for technical assistance to the insular areas, as did the CARES Act. The Commonwealth has already been allocated its $4 million from the earlier legislation. And the HEROES Act allows for the use of disaster funds as a local match for FEMA grants.

Improvements to Medicaid

Sablan and Pacific delegates' goal of repealing the cap on federal Medicaid expenditures in the islands was only partially addressed. The HEROES Act does remove the cap, but for expenditures that result from the increased federal/local matching rate, which would now be 97/3 beginning July 1. Currently the federal/local matching rate for the Marianas is 89/11.

"This is definitely a step in the right direction," Sablan said. "And it gives us a basis to negotiate with the Senate for a full repeal."

Sablan's legislation repealing the cap on Medicaid, H.R. 6495, now has 21 cosponsors, including a number of committee and subcommittee chairs. Medicaid is the federal health insurance program for low-income persons. Over 15,000 people in the Marianas get their healthcare through Medicaid.

Relief for veterans

Another underserved group, often at special risk from the coronavirus and highlighted by Sablan in a personal letter to Pelosi on May 5, is the veterans community in the Marianas.

The HEROES Act responds to veterans' needs in a number of ways. Veterans without a disability, but determined to have a financial hardship, would now qualify for enrollment in the Veterans Administration's health care system, and be exempt from payment of hospital and medical care copays.

The deadline for veterans to file claims and appeals for VA benefits, including disability compensation, is extended for the duration of the coronavirus public health emergency and for 90 days after the emergency has ended.

And the Act prohibits the Veterans secretary from taking enforcement actions to collect payments for benefit debts, establishing new benefit debts, sending notices regarding benefit debts to individuals or consumer reporting agencies, allowing interest to accrue on benefit debts, or applying administrative fees on benefit debts. ***(PR)***

THINGS TO KNOW

As of May 13, 2020. All information may change without prior notice. For corrections and additions to this list, send an email to editor@saipantribune.com or call 235-6397 or 235-2440.

FAQs: Employee Retention Credit under the CARES Act

The Employee Retention Credit under the CARES Act encourages businesses to keep employees on their payroll. The refundable tax credit is 50% of up to $10,000 in wages paid by an eligible employer whose business has been financially impacted by COVID-19. For details, go to https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/faqs-employee-retention-credit-under-the-cares-act.

Updated Government Resource listing

The CNMI government has issued an updated government resource listing as of May 11, 2020, which includes all government offices and agencies that are still operational and offering services to the public during the governor›s public health emergency. See Page 10 of today's *Saipan Tribune*. For additional details, click on link at www.saipantribune.com.

How Trump admin is supporting the CNMI

The Trump administration outlines how it is supporting the people of the CNMI in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. For details, click on link at www.saipantribune.com.

USDA outlines telehealth service changes

The U.S. Department of Agriculture issues a summary of key service changes to increase the use of telehealth in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures include allowing rural health clinics and federally qualified health centers to serve as "distant site" providers, increasing the types of services that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services can deliver via telehealth, and allowing certain telehealth services to be delivered to Medicare recipients by phone. For details, go to https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDARD/bulletins/289d418.

USDA RD takes steps to help

USDA Rural Development has taken a number of immediate actions to help rural residents, businesses and communities affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Rural Development will keep our customers, partners, and stakeholders continuously updated as more actions are taken to better serve rural America. Visit www.rd.usda.gov/coronavirus for more information. Or click on https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDARD/bulletins/2894700.

SBA Fact Sheet

The U.S. Small Business Administration has issued a "Fact Sheet for the CNMI" about the Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loans. Read it by clicking on the link at www.saipantribune.com.

Commerce Department in operation

The CNMI Department of Commerce will continue to provide services to the CNMI business community via means of teleworking.

For direct support and services, the CNMI is advised to contact the support team via the department's website at info@commerce.gov.mp and indicate the attention to the respective division or section for the appropriate services. See DOC advisory at the link at www.saipantribune.com.

FBI alert vs online scams

FBI issue an alert to the public to be on the lookout for scams that exploit the current COVID-19 pandemic. See FBI advisory at the link on www.saipantribune.com.

Process for mass testing

Mass testing for COVID-19 is ongoing at the Saipan International Airport. The test is free. People interested in being tested for COVID-19 can request for an appointment for specimen collection on the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. website at https://chcc.gov.mp/covid19testing.php or over the phone through the COVID-19 Info Line. For more information, see link at www.saipantribune.com.

US gives $133M to FSM, RMI

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Department of the Interior has provided $133,114,602 in fiscal year 2020 grant payments to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands as provided for under the Compact of Free Association, or Public Law 108-188.

"This $133 million in funding provided for under the Compact of Free Association agreements is critical to basic government operations and in providing stability for individuals and families in both the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Payments also bolster disaster emergency funds for unforeseen events and their respective Compact Trust Funds for the future," said Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, Douglas W. Domenech. "Secretary Bernhardt and I are proud of Interior's role as part of the larger U.S. Government relationship with these freely associated states."

According to U.S. Ambassador to Micronesia Carmen Cantor, "The funding…shows our enduring commitment to the people of [FSM]. These funds not only support Micronesia's current response to the coronavirus pandemic, but also help build a more stable and prosperous future for all Micronesian citizens."

In the Marshall Islands, U.S. Ambassador Roxanne Cabral said, "We stand together to strengthen the prosperity of the Marshall Islands and to continue to improve the livelihoods of all Marshallese citizens. Our support for priority areas such as education, health, and infrastructure creates a strong foundation for continued growth in the Marshall Islands."

Thus far, payments made to the FSM in fiscal year 2020 consist of Compact Sector Grant assistance, Supplemental Education Grant assistance, and a deposit into the FSM Compact Trust Fund, altogether totaling $79,320,663, as detailed below.

FSM FY2020 Compact Payments	
FSM Compact Trust Fund	$33,809,600
Health	$16,719,000
Education	$16,519,184
Supplemental Education Grant	$7,709,580
Infrastructure	$2,960,790
Public Sector Capacity Building	$750,000
Enhanced Reporting & Accountability	$572,764
Disaster Assistance Emergency Fund	$244,260
Public Sector Development	$35,485
Total Payments through 4/2020	$79,320,663

In addition, payments made to the Republic of the Marshall Island in fiscal year 2020 thus far consist of Compact Sector Grant assistance, Supplemental Education Grant assistance, support of the Kwajalein Land Use Agreement, and a deposit into the RMI Compact Trust Fund, altogether totaling $53,793,939, as detailed below.

RMI FY2020 Compact Payments	
RMI Compact Trust Fund	$23,645,000
Kwajalein Landowner Payments	$9,000,000
Education	$6,577,956
Health	$3,703,602
Infrastructure	$3,489,817
Ebeye Special Needs- Health and Education	$3,085,058
Special Education Grant	$2,104,026
Ebeye Special Needs - Infrastructure	$1,593,288
Disaster Assistance Emergency Fund	$248,600
Kwajalein Environment	$145,383
Kwajalein Impact Fund	$106,872
Single Audit	$94,337
Total Payments through 4/2020	$53,793,939
Kwajalein Impact Fund	$106,872
Single Audit	$94,337
Total Payments through 4/2020	$53,793,939

Compact Sector allocations for the FSM and the RMI are approved each year by bilateral Joint Economic Management Committees. Compact assistance provided to-date for fiscal year 2020 include deposits to the FSM Compact Trust Fund (https://fsmcfatf.com/), the RMI Compact Trust Fund (https://rmicfatf.com/), Disaster Emergency Assistance Funds, and Single Audits. ***(PR)***

NMI high court affirms man's 20-year sentence for robbery

On May 8, 2020, the Supreme Court issued its opinion in *Commonwealth v. Martin*, affirming Martin's 20-year sentence for robbery.

In 2017, Martin disguised himself, entered a poker establishment, and stole $500 by threatening a cashier with a hammer. Martin pleaded guilty to robbery and requested for a sentence of time served, which was approximately seven months and 20 days at the time of sentencing, and to be deported to Palau. Martin challenged his sentence, arguing that the trial court (1) did not properly weigh his sentencing factors; (2) impermissibly restricted parole eligibility; and (3) automatically imposed the maximum sentence for theft, robbery, and burglary cases.

The Supreme Court affirmed Martin's sentence, finding that the trial court properly assessed his individual characteristics. The trial court balanced mitigating factors such as Martin's demonstrated remorse and acceptance of responsibility against aggravating factors such as his lengthy criminal record, repeat offender status, and escalating violent endeavors with dangerous weapons. The Supreme Court determined that the trial court sufficiently justified parole restriction by explaining Martin's previous seven-year sentence failed to rehabilitate and deter him from committing the current crime. It also found that the trial court did not automatically impose maximum sentences for theft, robbery, and burglary cases. Because the trial court properly individualized Martin's sentence, the Supreme Court concluded it did not abuse its discretion.

The high court's full opinion is available at https://cnmilaw.org/pdf/supreme/2020-MP-10.pdf. For further information, contact the Supreme Court at 236-9800. ***(PR)***

AMP to host teacher ranger program

This summer, American Memorial Park has been selected to participate in the Teacher Ranger Teacher program. The purpose of the program is to provide teachers an opportunity to learn about National Park Service educational resources and themes while earning continuing education credits through a partnership between the NPS and the University of Colorado, Denver.

Participating teachers will spend 240 hours working with park staff developing an education program as well as completing three graduate credit hours of coursework in Experiential Learning online. Upon completion of the program, teachers will receive a $3,000 stipend from the university. The program will begin on June 15, 2020.

Teachers instructing K-12th grade students are encouraged to apply. Due to the current situation with COVID-19, all work for this summer's program will be completed remotely and the selected teacher must have access to a computer and internet. The deadline for applications is May 22, 2020. To request an application, or to learn more about the program visit the park's website: https://www.nps.gov/amme/learn/education/index.htm or contact AMP ranger Brooke Nevitt at brooke_nevitt@nps.gov and include Teacher Ranger Teacher in the email subject line. ***(NPS)***

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS
Tel: (670) 234-3751 • Website: www.dpl.gov.mp • Email: dpl@dpl.gov.mp
Facebook Address: facebook.com/DPLCNMI

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public land in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot 182 E 01 containing an area of approximately 4,545 square meters, more or less, situated in Lower Base, Saipan. A map showing the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands and website www.dpl.gov.mp for inspection.
ii. The prospective lessee is Triple Star International Corporation. The lists of officers for Triple Star International Corporation are Wei Gang Xiong, as President, Zhang Qing, as Corporate Secretary.
iii. The proposed lease is compliant with DPL regulations and was negotiated by the officers and directors of Triple Star International Corporation, mainly Wei Gang Xiong.
iv. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of the providing recycling services that collect, recycle, and market scrap materials, and the retail sale of electronics and appliances.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term of the lease agreement is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property plus the applicable percentage of Business Gross Receipts in DPL's regulation.

v. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; 1st floor of the De'Ana Commercial Building, Songsong Village, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian. A copy will also be available online at www.dpl.gov.mp
vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Lower Base, Saipan.
vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before May 26, 2020 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NUTISIAN I MAPROPONI NA ATKILON TÅNU´ PUPBLIKU

Gi sigun Seksiona 106 (b) gi Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku mannåå'i guini nutisia put i intensiona para u atkila finitmi na tanu' pupbliku giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Mariånas. Maseha håyi na pattida ni intirisao gi hålum heneråt pupbliku siña muna'hålum upiñon, imfotmasion, pat testimoniun kinontra gi tinahguin prinoponi siha para i atkilon nu i tanu' pupbliku. Kumu mapribeni mås mo'na ginin i Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i tinattitiyi pettanesin na imfotmasion manisisita para u mapupblika.

i. I maproponi na atkilon tanu' pupbliku madiskribi kumu Lot 182 E 01 ni konsisisti kåsi 4,545 square meters, mås pat menus, ni gaigi gi Lower Base, iya Saipan. I kopian måpa nu i påttin i lugåt managuaha gi ufisinan Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku yan website gi www.dpl.gov.mp para inspeksion.
ii. I "prospective lessee" i "Triple Star International Corporation". I listan i ufisiåt siha para i Triple Star International Corporation si Wei Gang Xiong, kumu Presidenti, Zhang Qing, kumu Sekritåriun "Corporate."
iii. I maproponi na atkilon ha tattiyi i regulasion DPL siha yan manegosiu ginin i ufisiåt yan direktot i Triple Star International Corporation, mayutmentu si Wei Gang Xiong.
iv. I lessee debi na u usa i lugåt para atyu na rason na para u pribeniyi "recycling" na sitbisiu ni ha rikohi, "recycle," yan bendi i mansopbla na matiriåt siha, yan para u fambendi "electronics" yan "appliances."

I tema nu i maproponi na kontråtan atkilon sa bentisingku (25) åñus na tiempu.

I maproponi na atkilu gi kada' såkkan gi durântin i teman i kontråtan atkilon mapega gi pusentu nu i bålin "appraised fair market" i propiedåt yan i propiu na pusentun i Risibun Hina'halum Bisnis gi halum regulasion i DPL.

v. I kopian nu i maproponi na Kontråtan Atkilon siña machuli' gi ufisinan i Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku, ni gaigi gi sigundu (2nd) na bibiendan i Joeten Dandan Commercial Building iya Dandan, Saipan, primet (1st) na bibiendan i De'Ana Commercial Building, iya Songsong Village, Luta; pat i primet (1st) na bibiendan i Kings Commercial Building, giya Tini'an. I kopia debi lokkui' na managuaha online gi www.dpl.gov.mp
vi. I Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku tåya marisibi ni håfa na tinahguin inofresi siha ni para u ma'atkila i suhetu na tanu' pupbliku gi Lower Base, Saipan.
vii. I Sekritårian Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku ha aksesepta tinigi' upiñon, imfotmasion, testimoniun kinontra pat tinahguin prinoponi siha ginin i manintirisåo na pattida siha gi pat åntis di May 26, 2020 gi ufisinan Dipåttamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha ni gaigi giya Sa'ipan, Luta pat Tini'an.

ARONGORONG REEL POMMWOL ATKKILÓÓNOL FALUWEER TOULAP

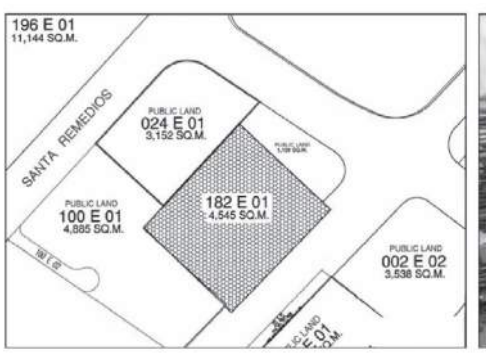
Sángi Tálil 106 (b) reel Alléghúl Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap e attotoowow arongorong reel igha re mángemángil rebwe atkkilaay akkááw faluweer toulap llól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúw kka Efáng llól Marianas. Schóó kka re mwuschel isiisilong kkapas, data, views, ngáre angiingi reel pommwol atkkilóónol faluweer toulap. Eyoor sángi Alléghúl Toulap 15-2, arongorongol ikka e amwirimwiritiw ebwe akkatééwow.

i. Faluweer toulap iye rebwe atkkilaay e bwáálló bwe Lot 182 E 01 ebwe bwáá bwe 4,545 reel square meters, elapeló ngáre eghus, iye e lo Lower Base, Seipél. Eyoor pappidil falúw yeel me Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap me website www.dpl.gov.mp
ngáre u mwuschel amwuri.
ii. Schóól Atkkilóón nge Triple Star International Corporation. Ikkal list-al "officers" me Triple Star International Corporation nge Wei Gang Xiong, bwe "President", Zhang Qing, Bwe "Corporate Secretary".
iii. Pommwol Atkkilóón nge e angúúngú ngáli mwóghutughutúl DPL me e abwungubwung sángi "officers" me "directors-il" Triple Star International Corporation, i Wei Gang Xiong.
iv. Schóól Atkkilóón ebwe yááyá falúw bwulul ebwe ayoorai angaangil "recycling" iye ebwe bweibwogh, "recycle", me "market scrap materials", me akkaméélól "electronics" me "appliances".

Pommwol abwungubwungúl Atkkilóón nge ruweigh me limoow ráágh.

Pommwol atkkilóónol ghal ráágh nge e lo reel percentage sángi appraised fair market value reel falúw ebwal schuulong applicable percentage reel Business Gross Receipts llól mwóghutughutúl DPL.

v. Pappidil pommwol abwungubwungúl Atkkilóón emmwel ubwe bweibwogh mereel Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap, iye e lo 2nd floor reel Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Seipél; 1st floor reel De'Ana Commercial Building, apilómwol Songsong, me Luuta; ngáre 1st floor reel Kings Commercial Building, Tchiliyól. Ebwal yoor pappidil mille online me www.dpl.gov.mp
vi. Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap rese bweibwogh pommw iye re siiweli ngáli Atkkilóón iye e lo weiláng reel faluweer toulap me Lower Base, Seipél.
vii. Sekkretóóriyal Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap emmwelil bweibwogh ischil mángemáng, views, angii ngáre pommw iye re siiweli sángi schóó kka re mwuschel wóól ngáre mmwali May 26, 2020 me Bwulasiyol Ammwelil Faluweer Toulap me Seipél, Luuta, ngáre Tchiliyól.



Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Is DOJ capable of a fair investigation into the Ahmaud Arbery shooting?

The U.S. Department of Justice has stepped into the Ahmaud Arbery case, announcing on Monday that it would consider hate crime charges in the killing of the unarmed African American man in Georgia on Feb. 25. Georgia's attorney general also has asked the Justice Department to review state and local officials' handling of their investigations in the case. And the department would be well within its purview to consider civil rights charges.

Federal involvement is certainly welcome in the shocking incident, in which Arbery was trailed while out for a jog and then fatally shot, ostensibly because he looked like a suspect in a string of local burglaries. There were no arrests until leaked video sparked public outrage months after the incident.

Justice Department intervention would once have been deemed virtually automatic in such a case: an unarmed black man chased down and killed in a Southern state by two white men, one of whom, Gregory McMichael, is a former police officer and prosecutor's investigator. (The other man, McMichael's son, Travis McMichael, is alleged to have fired the fatal shots.) The situation brings to mind a legacy of lynching and vigilantism, and the blurry line that separates those extralegal practices from citizen "policing." It merges the distant memory of Emmett Till with the fresher scars left by the killing of Trayvon Martin.

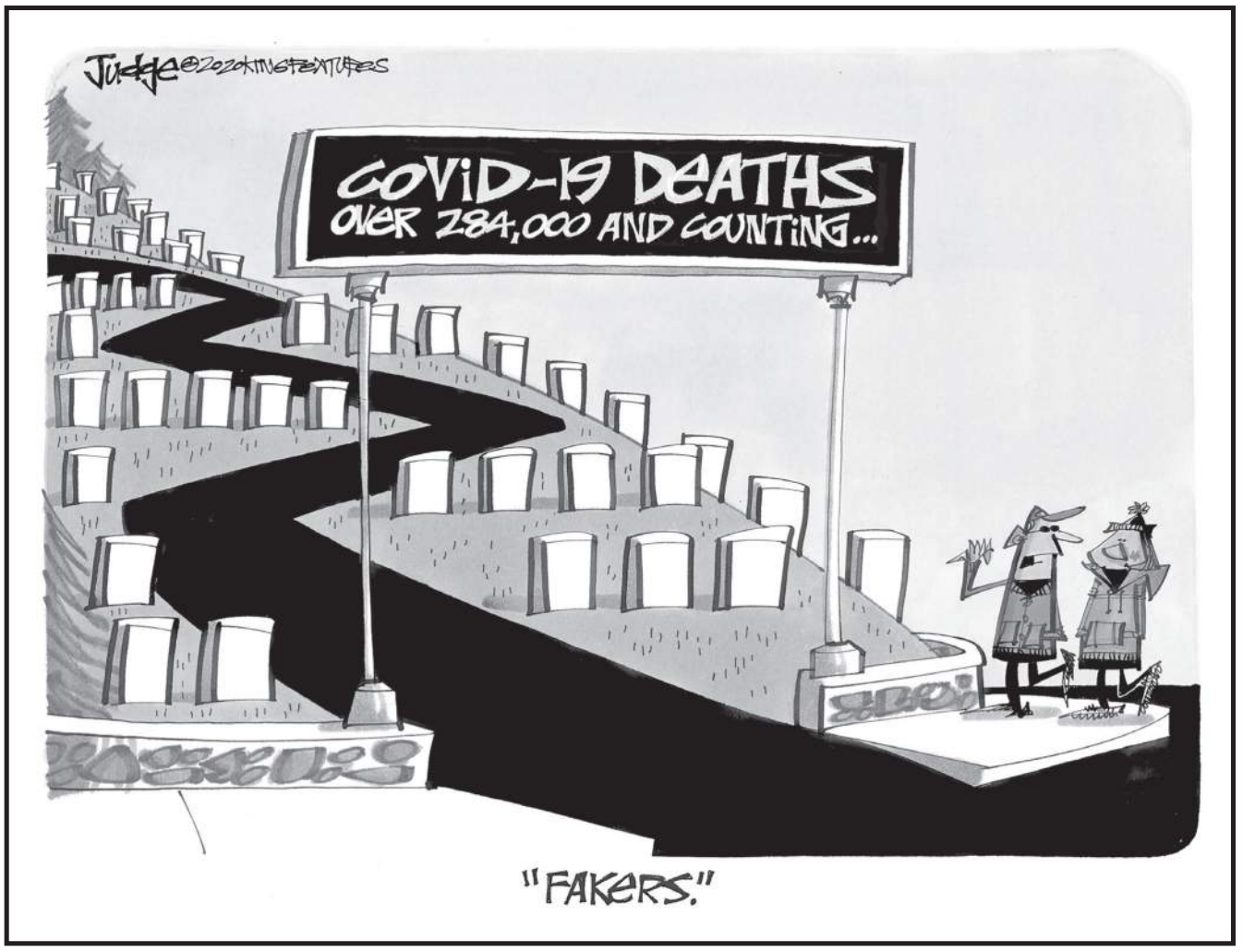
As welcome as federal involvement is, however, it no longer provides the confidence it once did that justice would be served. The department has sharply curtailed its role in state and local policing and prosecution. Jeff Sessions, President Donald Trump's first attorney general, made clear his intention to provide more support and less scrutiny to local police officials. He scuttled former Attorney General Eric Holder's oversight program for police departments and curtailed lawsuits against police, school districts and other agencies over patterns of civil rights violations.

Current Attorney General William Barr has been less vocal about nonintervention in local matters but for the most part has followed Sessions' policies.

At the local level, the case was convoluted and perhaps compromised by the elder McMichael's previous position as an officer in the Glynn County Police Department and a prosecutor's investigator. The department released both McMichaels without charges. After one local prosecutor recused herself from the case, a second advised police not to make arrests—and then recused himself as well. The state ultimately filed charges, and Georgia's attorney general said he would review the investigation into Arbery's death.

That's good, as far as it goes. But the state AG properly recognized that the troubling facts of not just the shooting but the aftermath require a separate examination by outside officials. There has long been a very useful interplay between state and federal authorities in controversial criminal investigations. U.S. participation could provide Georgia some solid backup, and perhaps win back some of the confidence that Sessions squandered.

(c)2020 *Los Angeles Times*



What we need in this pandemic is balance

By JOHN KASS
Chicago Tribune

John Kass is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune. *Readers may send him email at jskass@chicagotribune.com.*

Are we still all in this together?

It sounds like a shepherd singing to a flock while driving them to market. And that other one, the "stay safe" thing? It sounds like the bleating of sheep.

Stay safe? Are you serious?

We're reaching Great Depression levels, with 20 million jobs lost in April alone, and the unemployment rate at 14.7%, but I figure the real unemployment rate is larger.

All this economic ruin is due to the governors shutting down commerce to fight the coronavirus, to prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed. But maybe extreme social isolation of the young and healthy wasn't the wisest course.

What happened to balance?

We've lost our sense of balance in this viral panic.

Some will never get their old jobs back. Others are content to take their government unemployment checks and other federal assistance and figure they'll seek work after those checks stop coming. But there might not be jobs available when they feel like working again. Small-business owners are being flattened by the minute.

The economy is in a tailspin. And you don't start the economy up again by saying a few magic words and snapping your fingers.

The economy isn't a light switch. You don't turn it back on once it's been shut down. And we don't have years to wait for a vaccine. Already people are pushing against the shutdown, defying government orders, and the more idiotic politicians will push back with law enforcement, which will just increase the chaos.

"Stay safe?" Who is safe? Who was ever safe?

For decades now, we've taught ourselves to fear so many things, even risk itself. Risk was once the very idea of America. Your parents or grandparents may have risked everything to get here, just so they could risk even more.

Yet risk is now a dirty word. Generations have been taught that liberty isn't important, and that government must protect us from cradle to grave. We want safe spaces. We all want to "stay safe."

Yes, the coronavirus has caused death and, yes, death is to be avoided. I feel positively foolish for writing that sentence. But if I didn't there would be outrage and I would be deemed insensitive. I don't want to be insensitive. I don't want you to die or become ill, and if you've lost someone dear to you, I'm sorry.

A few among you might not mind if this viral Boomer Remover worked its magic on me, but I hope that's only a small bitter handful of Clintonistas. Just remember what Hillary says: Hate has no home here.

As I typed this, the hashtag #trumpdepression was trending on Twitter. At least we don't have to waste any more time pretending that the Democratic left wouldn't weaponize a deadly virus for political gain.

I get the politics. And it is much easier than pulling a muscle trying to rehabilitate the reputation of U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff, the California Democrat, now that his Russia collusion vision quest has blown up in his face. Although watching the TV pundit meltdown over this has been quite amusing, better even than watching Netflix.

But politics drive policy. I get the feeling those typing #trumpdepression never want the coronavirus lockdown to end.

The problem is that the mortgage and the rent comes due. And we're not all in this together, are we? Government doesn't cut its budgets or lay off political workers. Even if they're sitting at home, watching Netflix just like you, they're still getting paid. But if you've lost your job or your business, government still wants your tax dollars. So we aren't all in this together.

Let's stipulate that so far, some 70,000 Americans have died from the coronavirus, and many more will die, if we dare leave our homes and go back to work. But how many more will die from alcoholism, drug addiction, suicide, stress, domestic battery and on and on, in an economic depression that would hollow out the American people?

How many of us have already been pushed toward death by binge-eating while watching a steady shrieking stream of coronavirus fear porn on the TV news, and avoiding a visit to the doctor for fear of contracting the disease?

What I'm asking is that we at least think about something we've lost, besides jobs and our economic futures and the Bill of Rights:

Balance.

All I see is the imposition of extremes. Those of us who want to get the country back to work are portrayed as selfish fools who Just Want People to Die.

And those who never want the lockdown to end are dismissed as fearful Coronavirus Karens, peering through their windows, calling the police if they see someone walking on the street without a mask.

See PANDEMIC on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Discrimination infodemic

By DAWN MARGARET S. SABLAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

From the moment we heard of the coronavirus or COVID-19 everyone shared their personal thoughts and opinions. Information spread like wildfire with panic and fear behind each story. The infodemic or the information epidemic surrounding the virus has caused more damage than the actual coronavirus pandemic itself.

From panic buying, hoarding supplies, and sharing every information received on social media, to the fear and discrimination toward people of Asian descent, individuals who traveled and first responders grew. Although it may seem justifiable from our own points of view, we do not realize the real damage it causes.

As defined by Merriam Webster's dictionary, stigma is a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something. For example, assuming a certain group of people caused the coronavirus to spread. Stigma is dangerous because it can cause people to hide their symptoms and/or illness and hinder them from seeking appropriate medical care. Stigma is caused when we form our own opinions instead of fact-checking and holding our own selves accountable.

The best way to prevent stigma is to know and share the correct facts. Visit reliable sources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization and fact-check before sharing information with the public. Being aware and knowing what to share is a step toward recovery from the discrimination infodemic. Instead of sharing panic and fear, let us help each other by spreading accurate information.

For more information about the protections and advocacy for people who are being discriminated against due to assumed disability, contact the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI) at (670) 235-7273/4 or visit us on the web at www.nmpasi.org, www.facebook.com/NMPASI., and follow us on Instagram @nmpasi670.

Dawn Margaret S. Sablan is a projects specialist at the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems Inc.

Social distancing isn't a religion

By RICH LOWRY
King Features Synd., Inc.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

Forgive Jacksonville, Florida, for it has sinned.

The largest city in Florida partly reopened its beaches, and it became something of a national scandal. CNN ran a disapproving segment, and the hashtag #FloridaMorons trended on Twitter.

As the CNN report put it: "The scene at Jacksonville Beach wasn't one of caution in the middle of a worldwide pandemic. Crowds cheered and flooded the beach when police took the barriers down. People were seen swimming, biking, surfing, running and fishing."

None of these activities has been shown to be a vector for the spread of COVID-19; in fact, no outdoors activities have been shown to be dangerous at all. A recent study examined hundreds of outbreaks and traced only one to an outdoor environment.

Surfers and bikers are the least of our worries. Yet, there is a segment of American opinion that takes it as its responsibility to scold and shame anyone who dares go out and get a little fresh air.

Early on in the crisis, CNN anchors spent 20 minutes inveighing against people walking, running, biking and rollerblading along San Francisco's Embarcadero. Noting that some people were holding hands, Jake Tapper called it "enraging." Of course, random strangers don't hold hands, but people who are likely in close proximity whether they are enjoying a stroll or not.

Despite there being no indication that outdoor spaces abet the spread of the disease, parks have been shut down throughout the United States, and the closures are at times enforced with rigor. No less than Tom Brady was chased from a closed Tampa Bay park after he was discovered working out, apparently alone. A father in Colorado was briefly detained by police for the alleged offense of playing T-ball with his 6-year-old daughter on a softball field.

A sure sign of fanaticism is the inability to make distinctions, in this instance between risky and non-risky activities and between places hard hit and places not. It's one thing to hold a day-long, 100-person family reunion in a public park, quite another to jog through one. It's one thing to begin opening up in New York City, where there have been more than 10,000 deaths, and another to begin opening in Montana, where there have been 14.

Jacksonville, Florida is the seat of Duval County. With a population of nearly a million people, the county has had 17 COVID-19 deaths. It is hardly a hot spot.

At least some of the spleen would be taken out of the coronavirus debate if people acknowledged that we live in a vast continental country, with radically different ways of life. Not only are not all states the same, not all counties within states are the same.

But such is the lockdown zealotry that any thought that these kinds of places should be treated differently is considered heresy sure to get people killed. It seems indisputable that the lockdowns have slowed the spread of the disease, but at an enormous economic cost. We are going to have to show some flexibility and be willing to adopt a patchwork approach to opening up around the country.

We can't be beholden to public officials and commentators who, to paraphrase H.L. Mencken, have the haunting fear that someone, somewhere may be rollerblading.'

Nation must prepare to vote by mail

By HARVEY WASSERMAN
Tribune News Service

Harvey Wasserman wrote The People's Spiral of U.S. History (www.solartopia.org).This column was produced for the Progressive Media Project, which is run by The Progressive *magazine, and distributed by Tribune News Service.*

The more we learn about COVID-19, the more likely it seems most of us will be voting by mail this fall. Voting in person has become, and will likely remain, too dangerous.

Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, Colorado and Utah have long been voting by mail. California now says it will join them, and other states are likely to follow.

What's needed is a national commitment to voting by mail. Under this system, all registered voters would receive a postpaid ballot. They can then make their choices, sign the ballot, seal an interior envelope and send it back.

But for this to happen nationwide this fall, we must start working now.

First, we need to push back against the purging of voter rolls. Investigative reporter Greg Palast estimates some 17 million citizens have already been removed in advance of the 2020 election.

Further, some legislatures are demanding that ballots come in with one or two witness signatures, or even a notarization. This represents an insurmountable burden to many voters, which seems to be the point.

And now the Trump administration is acting as though it wants to eliminate the U.S. Postal Service, which would make it virtually impossible to get ballots out and back, something President Donald Trump appears to desire. He's claimed that with expanded early voting and voting by mail, "you'd never have another Republican elected in this country again."

Millions of Americans rely on mailboxes that might disappear with the postal service. Private delivery operations like UPS and FedEx are sure to be exceedingly expensive, and unlikely to serve rural areas, Native American reservations or college campuses.

The Brennan Center estimates voting by mail could hike the cost of our national election from $2 billion in 2016 to about $4 billion in 2020. GOP Senate leadership is blocking federal provision of that money, creating a void that state and local governments may be unable or unwilling to fill, an outcome Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) seems to relish.

Yet a vote by mail remains the most sensible option. According to election protection expert John Brakey, about 80% of the nation's precincts now have ballot imaging machines which should be able to handle the vote counts quickly, while still preserving the actual paper ballots for inevitable challenges.

Some voting stations will still be necessary for voters with handicaps, and for those wishing to newly register or re-register if they've been removed from the voter rolls for any reason. And vigilance will be needed by all to guarantee that the system works right.

In 2018, after filling out the ballot I got in the mail in California, I walked it into my Los Angeles neighborhood voting station on the Sunday before election Tuesday. Gracious poll workers made sure I knew my ballot would be treated with the respect it deserved.

You should settle for no less. In 2016, the U.S. had 116,990 voting stations, each with its own quirks, shortcomings, and potential for corruption. A simplified mail-in, paper-based system would represent a great standardized leap forward.

But the devil will be in the details. Americans hoping for a clean, fair, and reliable vote count this fall must pay attention to how their state and local officials intend to handle this election. It is the job of us all to protect this fundamental right.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To our Micronesian family

We would like to thank you all for your heartfelt compassion and kindness. The past several months have been very difficult for our family. My beloved wife, Irene, has prolonged health setbacks and I have recently been diagnosed with advanced cancer. We have been lifted up time and again by the well wishes and prayers from family and friends from Saipan and Micronesia. While facing these serious health challenges, we are humbled by this outpouring of love and concern.

Please know that Irene and I as well as our children will always be grateful for your prayers. We are incredibly blessed to have had so many wonderful friends during our 40 years living in Micronesia.

Being a long-time resident, I still follow the local news and keep in touch with dear friends on Saipan. My heart goes out to everyone that is struggling as we face challenging times with this pandemic. We all will certainly endure this challenge and come back stronger than ever.

Biba Marianas!

With deep appreciation and love,

The Facey Family
Jerry, Irene, John Paul, Jerene and Jeanette
Gilbert, Arizona

PANDEMIC

From Page 8

Please don't tell me to stay safe. I don't wish to be rude, but bleating "stay safe" at me is infuriating. I won't tell you to stay safe. You know why?

Because I have faith you are a rational person who can modify your behavior. And I hope you have faith that I'm not someone who Just Wants People to Die.

No one has ever been safe, except perhaps in a Hallmark card. Speaking of which, if you really want a coronavirus refrigerator magnet cliché, how about this?

End Coronavirus Fear Porn Now.

Turn off the TV news.

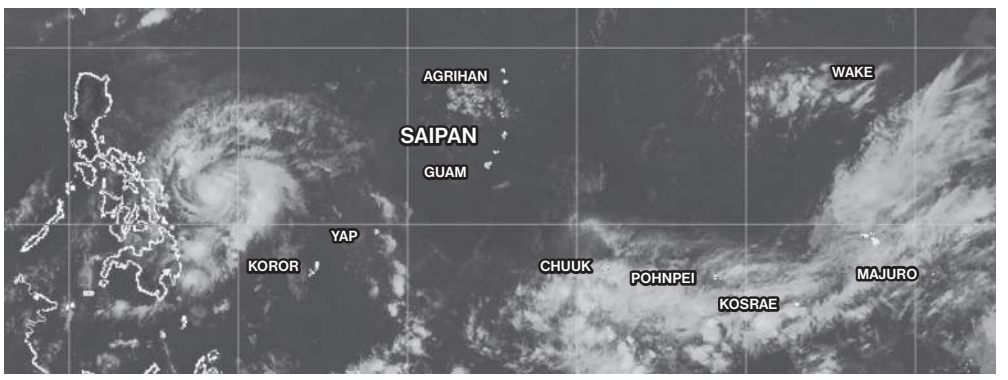
And seek balance.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 5 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
90° 79°	90° 79°	90° 79°	90° 79°	90° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:43 AM, WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite imagery shows a fairly dry pattern across the Marianas with the exception of isolated showers nearer Saipan and Tinian along a surface trough brushing by the region. Nighttime scatterometer data show moderate winds with buoys showing seas down to between 4 and 6 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 85°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	64° / 52°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	81° / 59°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	88° / 81°
Honolulu	Showers	85° / 71°
London	Partly Cloudy	57° / 39°
Los Angeles	Sunny	78° / 60°
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 82°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	59° / 43°
Miami	Thunderstorms	79° / 74°
New York	Mostly Cloudy	62° / 55°
Osaka	Cloudy	77° / 61°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	61° / 46°
Busan	Rain	64° / 61°
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	88° / 64°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	86° / 61°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	62° / 52°
Seoul	Rain	66° / 57°
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	79° / 63°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	74° / 64°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:48 AM	6:38 PM
Friday	5:48 AM	6:38 PM
Saturday	5:48 AM	6:38 PM
Sunday	5:47 AM	6:38 PM
Monday	5:47 AM	6:39 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	12:15 AM	11:52 AM	-
Friday	12:59 AM	12:43 PM	-
Saturday	1:39 AM	1:32 PM	-
Sunday	2:17 AM	2:19 PM	-
Monday	2:52 AM	3:05 PM	-

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:25 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.88
8:18 AM	LOW TIDE	1.30
12:04 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.52
7:36 PM	LOW TIDE	0.24

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 1 (MAY 11, 2020)

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
- ***Cashier & Customer Service***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 1:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4282
  Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org or via phone by calling toll free Tel: 1-(855)-729-2282

CNMI State Medicaid Agency
- ***Eligibility Office & Accounting / Claims***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
  Still accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office. Medicaid application & renewal/ redetermination forms must be original. Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp

Department of Labor
- ***Assistance with Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) programs call:***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 670-989-9090 / 9084 / 9081 / 9089 / 9083 / 9080
  Email: info@puamarianas.com
  Website: marianaslabor.net

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- *Available via phone or email only on Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays from*
  9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-6537/38
  Email: maryann@ovrgov.net

Department of Public Works
- ***Administrative Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 235-9570 / 5818
- ***Building Safety Code Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-2726 / 2296
- ***Energy Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 664-4480 / 4481
- ***Technical Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-9828 / 9838
- ***Roads and Grounds Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 322-9498
- ***Solid Waste Management Division***
  - ***Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill***
    Open all week except Wednesday
    7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
    Tel: (670) 322-2745

Dept. of Land and Natural Resources
- ***Division of Land Registration***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9987
- ***Division of Agriculture***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 256-3320
- ***Division of Fish & Wildlife***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-6000

SOCIAL DISTANCING TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL OFFICES

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE HOTLINE TEL: (670) 287-0046

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 2 (MAY 11, 2020)

Department of Finance
- ***Division of Revenue & Taxation***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-1000
- ***ALL OTHER DIVISIONS (Except Customs)***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
- ***Division of Customs Services***
  - ***Airport:*** OPEN DAILY
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Seaport:*** Monday - Friday
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Chalan Kanoa Post Office:***
    Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
    Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Department of Public Lands
- Cashier Window
  Monday - Thursday
  9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54
  For Appointments Call (670) 234-3751 or email dpl@dpl.gov.

Saipan Zoning Office
- *Available via phone only*
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-9661/2/3
  Email: yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp

Office of the Attorney General
- ***Civil & Criminal Divisions***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 237-7500 / 7600

Department of Public Safety
- ***Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV)***
  - ***Document Drop-Off For Vehicle / Watercraft Registration Renewal***
    Monday - Thursday
    9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
    Tel: (670) 664-9068
  - ***Document Drop-Off / Pick-up Drivers License***
    Monday - Thursday
    9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
    Tel: (670) 664-9066
- ***Firearms and Records***
  Monday - Thursday
  9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (For Walk-Ins)
  Tel: (670) 664-9072
- ***Highway Safety Office***
  Monday - Thursday
  9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9121 / 9125 / 9131

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- ***Fire Enforcement Office***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9178

Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs
- Monday – Friday
  7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 488-0220 / 0440
  Email: 0550glenna.reyes@gov.mp

Office of the Public Defender
- Monday - Friday
  9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-6503

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Business

Hyacinth Creations by Marge: Making dreams a reality

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Making dream events and parties come true is why Hyacinth Creations by Marge has been existing for seven years now. They specialize in assisting with design, planning, and management of a client's significant event whether it may be a public or private event like weddings, birthdays, and baptismal to name a few.

Hyacinth Creations By Marge is owned and operated by Marge Sugaste Palma and guarantees professional touch in every event.

"We specialize on breathtaking decorations from tabletops, backdrops, to displays to name a few…. satisfying those that trust in our craft is why we pour our hearts so deeply on events because what comes from the heart has a better potential to become a masterpiece," said Hyatt Creations managing director and supervisor Margie Sugaste Palma

For more information, go to their Facebook page: Hyacinth Creations by Marge.

"Hyacinth Creations by Marge is a business that revolves around working closely with clients to plan and create their dream celebration—to impress and meet the vision of our clients and their guests. We have provided our expertise to many communities, establishments, and organizations…our service adheres to quality and excellence that is always maintained," she added.

Due to the ongoing global pandemic, many business owners adjusted operations and the special events industry was also hit as the CNMI government have banned gatherings of more than 10 people. But this did not stop Hyacinth Creations to keep going.

"We engage in making personalized gifts on seasonal occasions like Valentine's Day in February and Mother's Day last week… For Mother's Day, we created nameplate displays which is a beautiful token to show mothers appreciation and air balloon treats for their loved ones," Palma said

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Hyacinth Creations By Marge offers personalized gifts like the name plates they came out with for Mother's Day.

"We encourage our clients that they may order personalized gifts regardless of the occasion… we are known to offer the 'Surprise Box,' a personalized box carrying requested items by the client… we often ask customers not to hesitate for we ensure that we will manage their desires… This coming Father's Day, clients will expect more from us as we have been brainstorming and preparing for this coming occasion. These nameplates are only the start of our continuous growth during lockdown," Palma added.

The many years in business has taught Palma and the rest of her Hyacinth Creations team to give value to the word commitment.

"When you commit and value the client, community members and the relationship that you have built with them, you earn public respect. We have retained the philosophy of not chasing money because you may lose yourself along the way. Instead, pursue what you are passionate about and it will feel as though you did not work a single day in your life."

"In business, there are bound to be sacrifices and Hyacinth Creations is not a business built on money but from the passion brought by many supporting hearts," she added.

Hyacinth Creations By Marge is located in San Antonio. They are open from Monday to Friday, 9am to 6m. For more information, go to their Facebook page: Hyacinth Creations by Marge.

Whether for public or private events, Hyacinth Creations by Marge can help you set it up making your dream event come true.

Fauci warns: More death, econ damage if US reopens too fast

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. government's top infectious disease expert issued a blunt warning Tuesday that cities and states could "turn back the clock" and see more COVID-19 deaths and economic damage alike if they lift coronavirus stay-at-home orders too fast -- a sharp contrast as President Donald Trump pushes to right a free-falling economy.

"There is a real risk that you will trigger an outbreak that you may not be able to control," Dr. Anthony Fauci warned a Senate committee and the nation as more than two dozen states have begun to lift their lockdowns as a first step toward economic recovery.

The advice from Fauci and other key government officials—delivered by dramatic, sometimes awkward teleconference—was at odds with a president who urges on protests of state-ordered restraints and insists that "day after day, we're making tremendous strides."

Trump, whose reelection depends to a substantial degree on the economy, talks up his administration's record with the virus daily.

Underscoring the seriousness of the pandemic that has reached Congress and the White House, Fauci and other experts testified from their homes. Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander chaired the hearing from the study in his cabin in Tennessee, although several committee members attended in person in an eerily empty Capitol Hill chamber, masked and sitting 6 feet apart.

The tension in balancing people's safety from the virus, which is still surprising doctors with the sneaky ways it can kill, against the severe economic fallout is playing out in many other countries, too. Italy partially lifted lockdown restrictions last week only to see a big jump in confirmed COVID-19 infections in its hardest-hit region. And Lebanon relaxed a national lockdown late last month but said Tuesday the restrictions are being reinstated for the rest of the week after a spike in reported infections.

Musk becomes champion for businesses defying shutdown orders

At the Fit4All Gym in Lebanon, Illinois, owner David Tate considers Elon Musk a huge ally in the fight against government coronavirus orders that Tate says are driving him into the poorhouse.

Tate reopened his 250-member gym in defiance of state orders on Monday, the same day Musk restarted his huge San Francisco Bay Area factory despite being told not to by the county Health Department.

Like other business owners hit hard by coronavirus shutdown orders, Tate says Musk is a leader in the growing movement to reopen in the face of government orders, giving smaller businesses a boost and letting them know they're not in the fight alone.

"We needed somebody with a voice as big as his to step up and say what he did," Tate said.

Musk, with 34 million Twitter followers, has openly defied an order from the Alameda County Health Department to conduct only minimum operations at the plant in Fremont, California, that normally employs 10,000 people. On Twitter he has made derisive comments about the county's top health official. He has called the stay-home restrictions "fascist" and said they rob people of freedom.

While Musk is getting support on social media from his devoted followers and even President Donald Trump, his actions might cost him in the long run. Many who buy his expensive electric vehicles do so because they tilt to the left politically and want to make a statement about protecting the environment. And they have criticized Musk in the past when he's allied too closely with Trump.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

S&P	DOW	NASDAQ
2,857.00	23,639.00	9,103.75
+4.50	+65.00	+25.50
+0.16%	+0.28%	+0.28%

EXCHANGE RATES
In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.54	Hong Kong Dollar	7.75	Russian Ruble	72.34
British Pound	0.81	Indian Rupee	74.75	Singapore Dollar	1.42
Canadian Dollar	1.41	Japanese Yen	107.20	South Korean Won	1,198.94
Chinese Yuan	6.98	Malaysian Ringgit	4.29	Swiss Franc	0.97
Euro	0.92	New Zealand Dollar	1.66	Taiwan Dollar	29.34
		Philippine Peso	49.31	Thailand Baht	32.05

Nation

GOP senators give Democrats' $3T relief bill a cold shoulder

WASHINGTON (AP)— House Speaker Nancy Pelosi unveiled a more than $3 trillion coronavirus aid package, a sweeping effort with $1 trillion for states and cities, "hazard pay" for essential workers and a new round of cash payments to individuals.

The House is expected to vote on the package as soon as Friday. But Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has said there is no "urgency." The Senate will wait until after Memorial Day to consider options.

"We must think big, for the people, now," Pelosi said Tuesday from the speaker's office at the Capitol.

"Not acting is the most expensive course," she said.

Lines drawn, the latest pandemic response from Congress will test the House and Senate — and President Donald Trump — as Washington navigates the extraordinary crisis with the nation's health and economic security at stake.

AP

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif., speaks about the so-called Heroes Act, Tuesday, May 12, 2020 on Capitol Hill in Washington.

The Democrats' Heroes Act is built around nearly $1 trillion for states, cities and tribal governments to avert layoffs, focused chiefly on $375 billion for smaller suburban and rural municipalities largely left out of earlier bills.

The bill will offer a fresh round of $1,200 direct cash aid to individuals, increased to up to $6,000 per household, and launches a $175 billion housing assistance fund to help pay rents and mortgages. There is $75 billion more for virus testing.

It would continue, through January, the $600-per-week boost to unemployment benefits. It adds a 15% increase for food stamps, new subsidies for laid-off workers to pay health insurance premiums under a COBRA law and a special "Obamacare" sign-up period. For businesses, it provides an employee retention tax credit.

There's $200 billion in "hazard pay" for essential workers on the front lines of the crisis.

Pelosi drew on U.S. history — and poetry — to suggest "no man is an island" as she called on Americans to respond to the crisis with a strategy of science, virus testing and empathy.

"There are those who said, 'Let's just pause,'" she said. "Hunger doesn't take a pause. Rent doesn't take a pause. Bills don't take a pause."

But the 1,800-page package is heading straight into a Senate roadblock.

Republicans are wary of another round of aid and McConnell declared the Democratic proposal a grab bag of "pet priorities." He said Tuesday it is not something that "deals with reality."

House Republicans also took a pass. "I can't believe that that would be real," said Rep. Andy Biggs, R-Ariz., leader of the hard-right House Freedom Caucus, said in an interview.

This would be the fifth coronavirus package. It's a starkly partisan offering with no real input from Republicans, who prefer to assess the impact of earlier expenditures before approving more.

But the political peril of doing nothing during an election year could prove challenging for Congress and the White House. As states experience flareups of virus outbreaks, and more than 30 million Americans remain unemployed in the shutdown, the near-term health and economic outlook remains daunting.

The Senate Democratic leader, Chuck Schumer of New York, warned that Trump and Republicans risk the same path as Herbert Hoover, the former president roundly criticized for failing to act to stem the Great Depression.

"What is it going to take for Mitch McConnell to wake up and see the American people need help, and they need it now?" Schumer said.

The latest package extends some provisions from previous aid packages, and adds new ones.

There is $25 billion for the U.S. Postal Service. There is help for the 2020 Census, including the bureau's request to delay deadlines for turning over apportionment and redistricting data. For the November election, the bill provides $3.6 billion to help local officials prepare for the challenges of voting during the pandemic.

The popular Payroll Protection Program, which has been boosted in past bills, would see another $10 billion to ensure under-served businesses and nonprofit organizations have access to grants through a disaster loan program.

For hospitals and other health care providers, there's another $100 billion infusion to help cover costs and additional help for hospitals serving low-income communities.

Basement-bound Biden campaign worries some Democrats

Joe Biden has no foreseeable plans to resume in-person campaigning amid a pandemic that is testing whether a national presidential election can be won by a candidate communicating almost entirely from home.

The virtual campaign Biden is waging from Wilmington, Delaware, is a stark contrast with President Donald Trump, who is planning travel despite warnings from public health experts about the coronavirus's spread. It also intensifies the spotlight on how Biden, the presumptive Democratic nominee, will manage his campaign, with some in his party fretting that his still-developing approach isn't reaching enough voters.

For now, Biden and his aides are brushing back hand-wringing from Democrats and mockery from Republicans who argue that the 77-year-old is "hiding in his basement."

"Voters don't give a s--- about where he's filming from," campaign manager Jen O'Malley Dillon told The Associated Press. "What they care about is what he's saying and how we connect with them."

Biden was more diplomatic in assessing the situation on Tuesday.

"The idea that somehow we are being hurt by my keeping to the rules and following the instructions that (have) been put forward by doctors is absolutely bizarre," he told ABC's "Good Morning America."

O'Malley Dillon took the helm of Biden's campaign in mid-March, just as coronavirus shutdowns commenced. She recently beefed up the campaign's digital and finance teams and said she'll unveil battleground state leadership in coming weeks. She also pointed to budding "partnerships" that include the national party's battleground state program.

But those moves haven't prevented critiques from prominent Democrats, including the architects of President Barack Obama's 2008 campaign, who question Biden's digital savvy and capacity to build the national vote-by-mail effort that might be necessary to win during a pandemic.

Obama allies David Plouffe and David Axelrod wrote in a recent New York Times op-ed that Biden's home studios resemble "an astronaut beaming back to earth from the International Space Station." They encouraged Biden to make wider use of platforms from Facebook and Twitter to Snapchat, Instagram and TikTok.

In a similar piece, Lis Smith, media strategist behind Pete Buttigieg's 2020 campaign, touted the virtues of local-market media and using celebrities more on other platforms.

Yvette Simpson, who leads the progressive group Democracy for America, said she's "very concerned" she cannot see "how we're going to engage people." She said the campaign has squandered time since Biden took command of the primary in early March.

House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn of South Carolina, a close Biden friend whose endorsement helped spur his run of primary victories, said he's "very worried" about Democrats building a voter turnout operation that balances in-person voting with absentee balloting.

Trump-backed Tiffany wins Wisconsin congressional race

MADISON, Wis. (AP)— Tom Tiffany, a state senator endorsed by President Donald Trump, easily won a special congressional election Tuesday in a heavily conservative, rural Wisconsin district, cheering Republicans even as Democrats argued the victory revealed vulnerabilities for the president among his base.

Tiffany's win over Democrat Tricia Zunker in northern Wisconsin's 7th District comes in the state's second election amid the coronavirus pandemic the past five weeks. Tiffany will replace former reality TV star Sean Duffy, a Republican who retired in September. The district has been vacant since Duffy's retirement.

Trump won Wisconsin by less than a point, but carried the district by 20 points, in 2016. Tiffany's win over Zunker was about 6 points less than that, based on preliminary results. Tiffany rejected Democrats' argument that the smaller margin was a sign that Trump's support was waning.

"Any time you lose by 14 points, I don't think that's a moral victory," Tiffany said. "This is a decisive victory here."

The win is in a district that Trump will need to once again win big if he hopes to again carry Wisconsin, a state he won by less than a point in 2016. Tiffany's big victory also helps to erase the taste of a loss by a conservative Wisconsin Supreme Court justice in last month's election, a race that boosted Democrats' confidence.

"Tonight was a win for President Trump and Tom Tiffany that demonstrates the enthusiasm behind our president across Wisconsin," said Trump campaign spokeswoman Anna Kelly.

Wisconsin Democratic Party spokeswoman Courtney Beyer said the results showed a drastic swing for Democrats, even though Zunker lost by about 14 points.

"For Trump to win reelection, red areas have to get redder to balance out blue areas getting bluer," she said.

Zunker said the race "laid the groundwork for this seat to turn blue in November."

Zunker, president of the Wausau School Board, was trying to become the first Native American from Wisconsin elected to Congress. She pulled in big-name endorsements including Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, but the numbers were against her. The district has been under Republican control since 2011 and was redistricted to more heavily favor Republicans.

World

Doctors and nurses suffered as Iran ignored virus concerns

CAIRO (AP)—They are regarded as heroes, their fallen colleagues as martyrs. But for doctors and nurses still dealing with Iran's growing number of coronavirus infections, such praise rings hollow.

While crippling sanctions imposed by the U.S. government left the country ill-equipped to deal with the fast-moving virus, some medical professionals say government and religious leaders bear the brunt of the blame for allowing the virus to spread -- and for hiding how much it had spread.

Those medical workers say they were defenseless to handle the contagion. And as a result, doctors and nurses in Iran have been hard hit by the virus. During the first 90 days of the virus outbreak alone, about one medical staffer died each day and dozens became infected.

"We are heading fast toward a disaster," said a young Isfahan doctor who has been working tirelessly, checking dozens of suspected coronavirus patients before referring them to hospitals.

It is no secret that Iran has been hit hard by the coronavirus. Official government figures show that around 100,000 people were infected by the virus and around 6,500 have died. But a report by the research arm of Iran's parliament said the number of cases could be eight to 10 times higher, making it among the hardest hit countries in the world. The report said the number of deaths could be 80% higher than officials numbers from the Health Ministry, about 11,700.

The Iranian government is currently reporting a decline in the number of COVID-19 infections and deaths in many areas, even though local authorities are expanding cemeteries in places like Tehran where the municipal council said it had to add 10,000 new graves to its largest cemetery, Behesht e-Zahra.

Interviews with more than 30 medical professionals and a review of communications by doctors on messaging apps and other documents by an Associated Press reporter in Cairo revealed many previously unreported details. The reporting paints a fuller picture of the roots and extent of the country's disjointed response as the deadly virus spread throughout the population.

In the beginning, medical staffers faced the outbreak with very limited equipment. Some washed their own gowns and masks or sterilized them in regular ovens. Others wrapped their bodies in plastic bags they bought at the supermarket.

The makeshift equipment didn't help. Further complicating the situation, the Health Ministry said millions of pieces of protective gear ordered by the agency were stolen and diverted to the black market.

The result: Dozens of medical professionals without adequate protection died along with their patients.

Iran's leaders, several medical professionals said, delayed telling the public about the virus for weeks, even as hospitals were filling up with people suffering from symptoms linked to the virus. And even as doctors and other experts were warning the Iranian president to take radical action, the government resisted, fearing the impact on elections, national anniversaries, and the economy.

"They wanted to send people to the streets," said a Mazandaran-based nurse and activist.

One doctor interviewed by The Associated Press—who, like all medical workers interviewed for this story, spoke only on the condition that they not be named for fear of persecution—said he and his colleagues were even discouraged from using protective equipment. He said government officials claimed wearing masks would cause panic.

The country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, proclaimed on March 10 that the doctors, nurses, and medical staffers who died in the fight against the coronavirus in Iran were "martyrs." Pictures of deceased doctors have been placed alongside those of soldiers who were killed in the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, which claimed the lives of a million Iranians and Iraqis.

"They are normalizing death," a Tehran-based health consultant said.

Homophobia threatens to hamper S. Korea's virus campaign

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—As South Korea grapples with a new spike in coronavirus infections thought to be linked to nightspots in Seoul, including several popular with gay men, it's also seeing rising homophobia that's making it difficult for sexual minorities to come forward for diagnostic tests.

The first confirmed patient in the new coronavirus cluster was a 29-year-old man who visited five nightclubs and bars in Seoul's Itaewon entertainment neighborhood in a single night before testing positive for the virus last Wednesday. Further investigation has since found more than 100 infections that appear linked to the nightspots.

A Christian church-founded newspaper, Kookmin Ilbo, reported last week that the places the man visited in Itaewon on May 2 included a gay club. The report was followed by a flood of anti-gay slurs on social media that included blaming the man and those at the club for endangering the country's fight against the pandemic.

Views on sexual minorities in South Korea have gradually improved in recent years, but anti-gay sentiments still run deep in the conservative country. Same-sex marriages aren't legal and there are no prominent openly gay politicians or business executives, though some have risen to stardom in the entertainment world.

Activist groups have criticized the Kookmin Ilbo report, saying that it was irrelevant that some of the nightspots the man went to were popular with gay people and the newspaper should not have disclosed it.

It's not even known how big role the man played in the new outbreak, with officials saying that local infections in Itaewon may have already begun before he contracted the illness. Authorities have been trying to track down and test thousands of people who may have come in contact with those infected, a process activist say has been made more difficult now that there is a sexual stigma attached to the new outbreak.

Lee Jong-geol, general director of the gay rights advocacy group Chingusai, said dozens of sexual minorities who had recently visited Itaewon clubs called his office and expressed worry about being outed or disadvantaged at work if they are placed under quarantine.

While there have been no reports hate crimes or physical attacks linked to the fresh surge of homophobia, Lee said "anxiety and fear have flared inside of sexual minority communities."

The new cluster threatens South Korea's hard-won gains in its virus fight, which were the result of aggressive contact tracing and mass testing. The roughly 30 new cases reported daily the past three days are higher than single-digit increases the country had been reporting recently. Still, it is far lower than the hundreds of cases recorded each day in late February and early March.

Survey: Many Taiwanese distance themselves from Chinese identity

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—About two-thirds of Taiwanese don't identify as Chinese, according to a survey released Tuesday that highlights the challenge China would face in bringing the self-governing island under its control.

The U.S.-based Pew Research Center found that 66% view themselves as Taiwanese, 28% as both Taiwanese and Chinese and 4% as just Chinese. The telephone poll of 1,562 people, conducted last fall, has a margin of error of 3.2 percentage points.

The results are consistent with other polls showing that people in Taiwan increasingly identify only as Taiwanese, Pew said.

Today's Taiwan was born of a civil war in China that brought Mao Zedong's Communists to power on the mainland in 1949. The rival Nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-shek, fled to Taiwan, an island about 160 kilometers (100 miles) off China's east coast.

Seventy years later, younger generations in particular have developed a distinct identity, with 83% of respondents under 30 saying they don't consider themselves Chinese.

Alexander Huang, a professor at Tamkang University in Taiwan, said it is a question of politics, not ethnic background. Younger Taiwanese grew up in a democracy, while China is a one-party state. Another factor, Huang said, is the diplomatic pressure that China puts on Taiwan and the military exercises it conducts in Taiwan's vicinity.

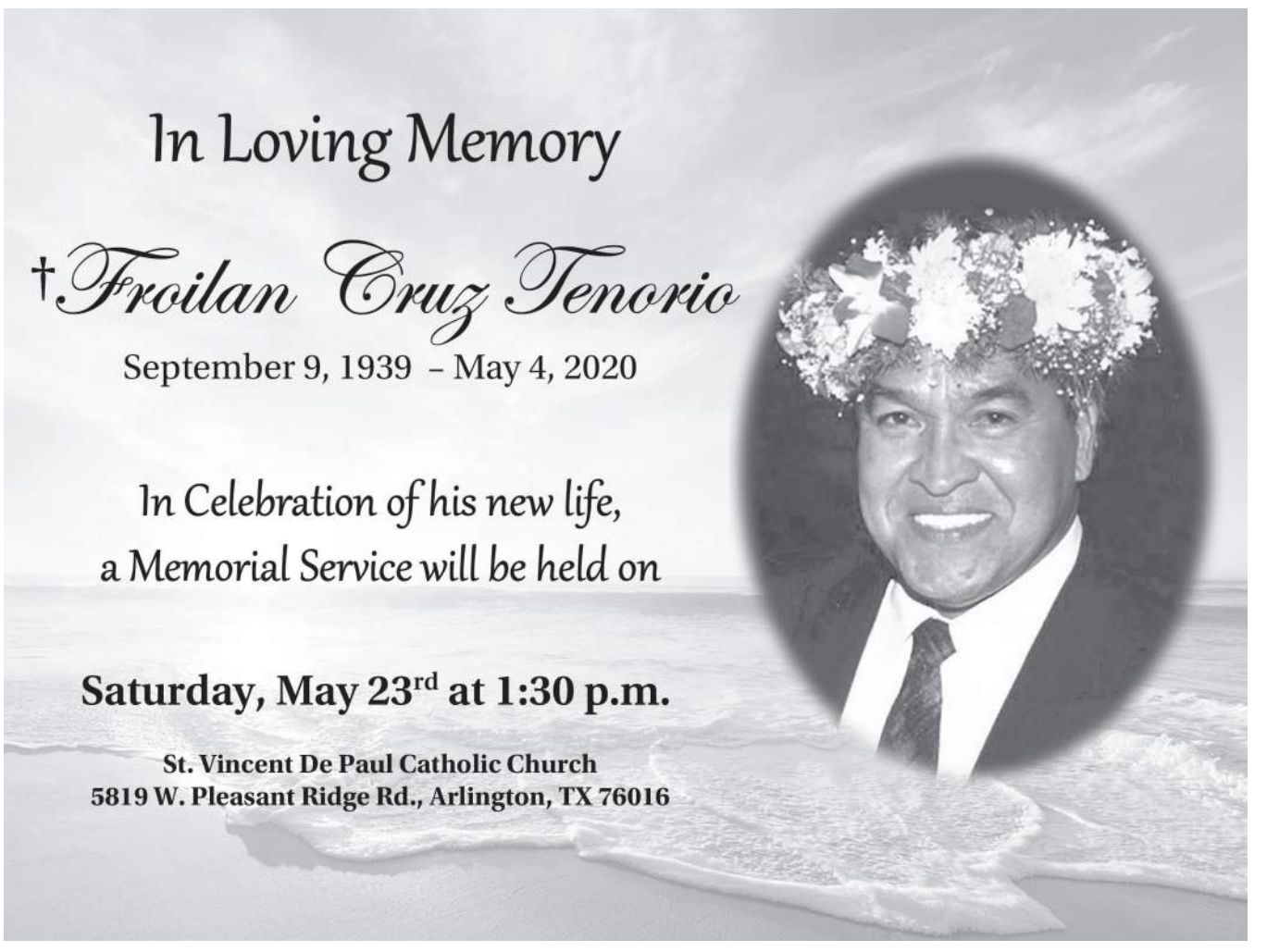
"We are ethnic Chinese for sure. But politically, I think that's the big difference," he said. "It is quite understandable that people don't want to be identified as Chinese."

In addition, about 2.3% of Taiwan's people are members of indigenous groups who are not ethnically Chinese.

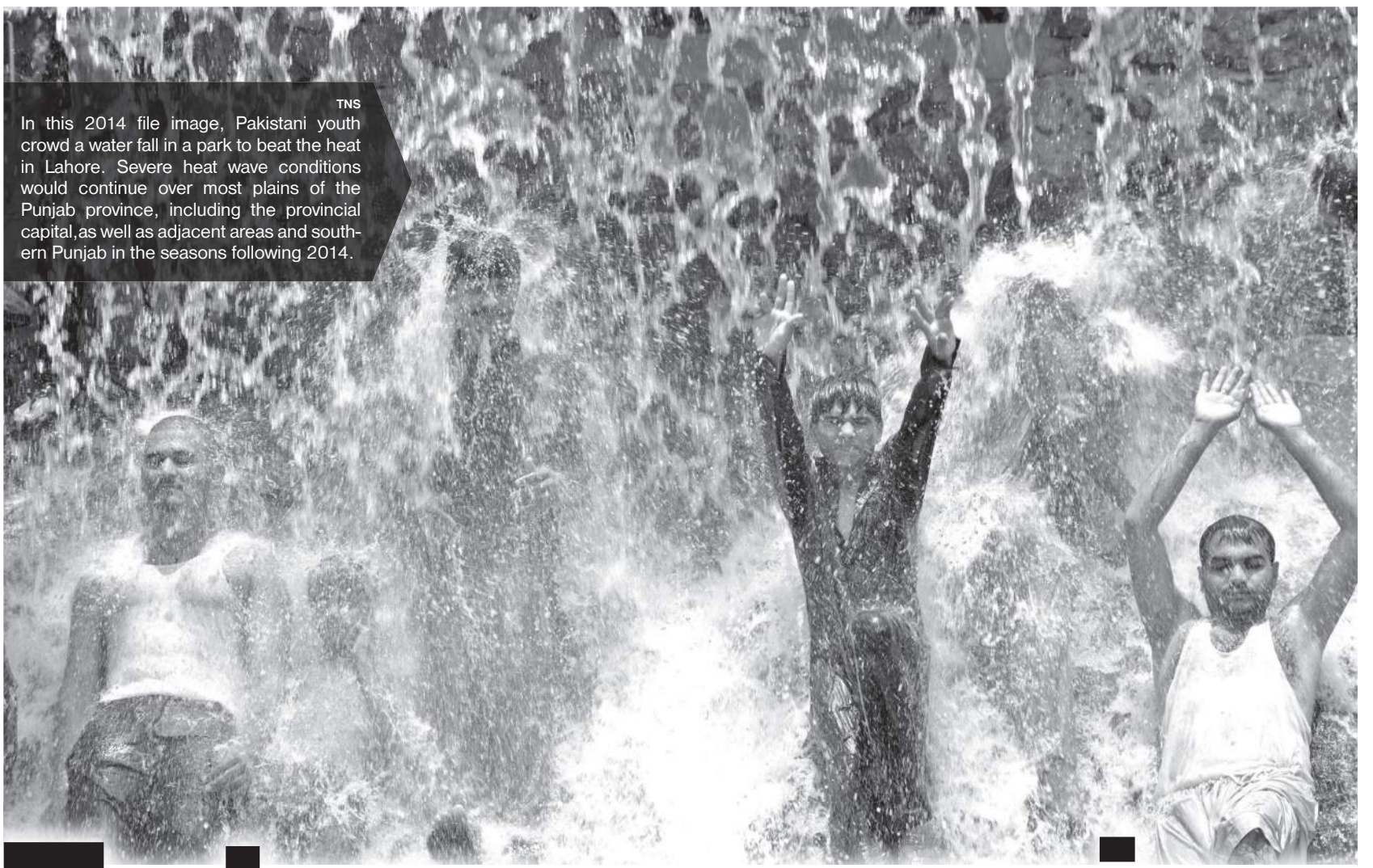
Taiwan has never declared independence, though in many ways it acts like a nation, with its own foreign ministry and military. China still considers the island of 23.6 million people part of its territory and bristles at any talk of independence. It favors peaceful unification but pointedly does not rule out the use of force, if necessary.

The Pew survey found that about 60% of Taiwanese have an unfavorable view of China. While 52% support closer economic ties with China, only 36% favor closer political ties.

Conversely, more than two-thirds have a favorable view of the U.S., with 79% supporting closer political ties. The U.S. cut formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1979 to recognize Beijing as the government of China, but it continues to sell fighter jets and other arms to Taiwan. A U.S. law requires that Washington ensure that Taiwan has the means to defend itself.


In Loving Memory
†Froilan Cruz Tenorio
September 9, 1939 – May 4, 2020
In Celebration of his new life,
a Memorial Service will be held on
Saturday, May 23rd at 1:30 p.m.
St. Vincent De Paul Catholic Church
5819 W. Pleasant Ridge Rd., Arlington, TX 76016

Environment



TNS

In this 2014 file image, Pakistani youth crowd a water fall in a park to beat the heat in Lahore. Severe heat wave conditions would continue over most plains of the Punjab province, including the provincial capital,as well as adjacent areas and southern Punjab in the seasons following 2014.

Future warming

arriving earlier than expected, study finds

By ERIC ROSTON
BLOOMBERG NEWS

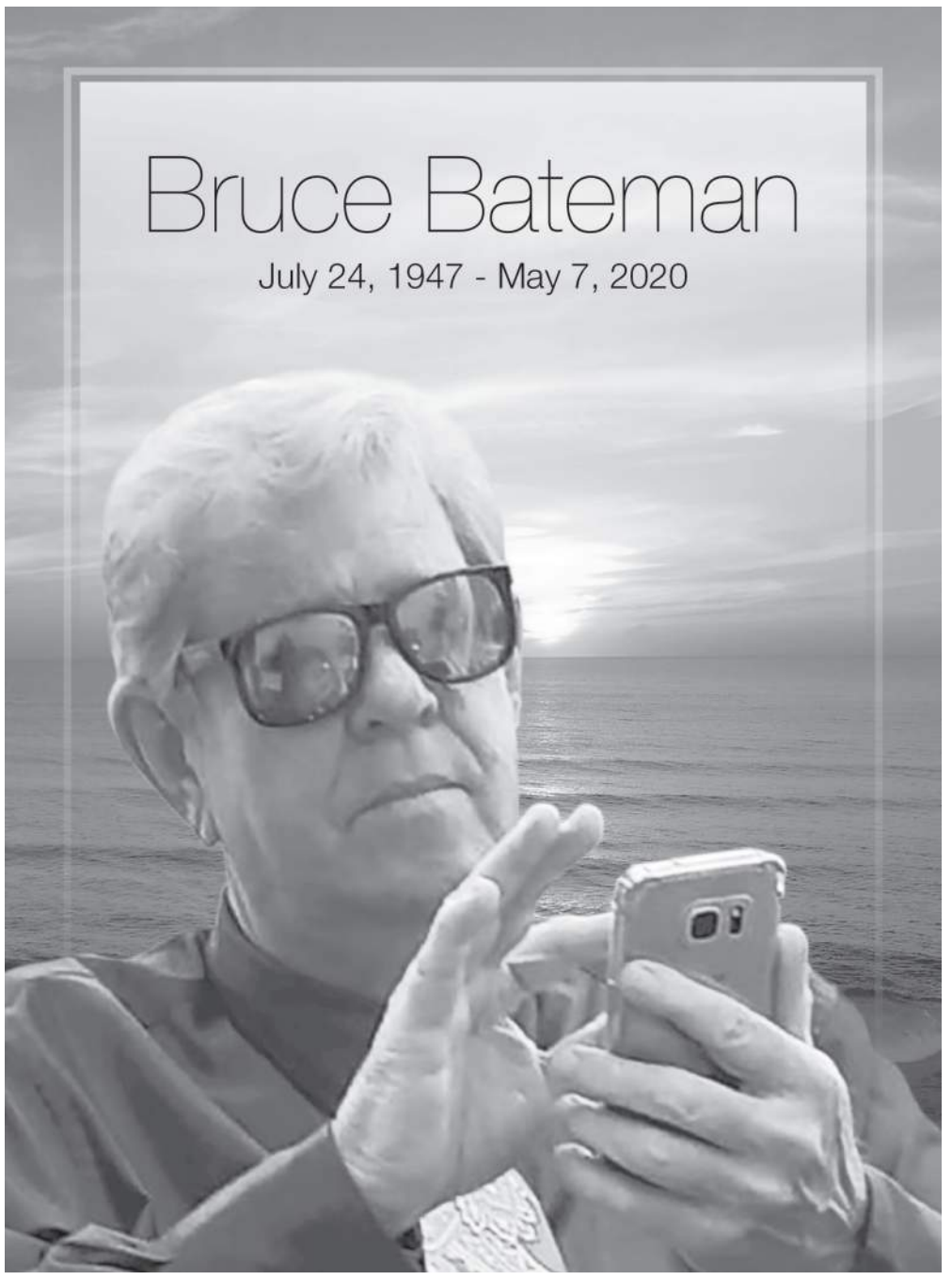
Climate scientists have previously warned that a lethal combination of heat and humidity will make currently inhabited parts of the planet uninhabitable for months at a time in the decades to come. New research finds that future is now.

The study — published in the journal Science Advances on Friday under the vivid title "The emergence of heat and humidity too severe for human tolerance" — found the Persian Gulf, along with parts of Pakistan, is already susceptible to novel severe events.

The researchers found that conditions briefly crossed into the danger zone — a combined heat and humidity, or "wet-bulb temperature," of 35°C — on 14 occasions, according to 40 years of hourly data. Readings of 33°C have come 80 times, and 31°C have occurred about 1,000 times, reaching beyond the Middle East and southern Asia.

Dozens of extreme events have occurred along the U.S. Gulf Coast, including New Orleans and Biloxi, Mississippi.

When heat and humidity produce a wet-bulb temperature of 35°C, the body passes a "survivability threshold," said Radley Horton, associate research professor at Columbia University's Earth Institute and a co-author of the study. It's theoretically the point when humidity and heat prevent skin from being able to cool off by sweating, causing the body to overheat, potentially fatally.



"Conceptually, this is a really powerful, scary idea," Horton said. It's "the notion that the combination of heat and humidity could be so extreme that a perfectly fit person, sitting in the shade, not moving at all, endless supply of water, either unclothed or wearing perfect clothes for sweating, would not, thermodynamically, be able to sweat fast enough to avoid overheating and getting heatstroke."

The Gulf of California, the Gulf of Mexico, the shores of the Red Sea and India's Southern coast will also suffer from dangerous wet-bulb events decades ahead of previous projections, the researchers found.

The survivability threshold is a general designation. Deadly conditions have already come at lower extreme humid-heat levels. Recent mass-casualty events have occurred with wet-bulb temperatures of about 28°C, including the 2003 European heat wave, which killed more than 70,000 people, and the 2010 Russian heatwave and fires that killed more than 50,000 people.

The researchers found that dangerous humid-heat events, above wet bulb temperatures of roughly 30°C, doubled between 1979 and 2017.

The global average temperature has risen more than 1°C since the preindustrial era. As a result, the number of people exposed to deadly humid-heat conditions has reached 9 million people, up from zero, previously. At 2°C of warming, that number grows to 210 million, and at 3°C, 711 million people, according to a paper accepted in Environmental Research Letters in February.

It's not just humans who are suffering, but other species we've come to rely on. Writing in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences last week, a team of researchers found that the temperature shift coming in the next 50 years is greater than humans, livestock and crops have experienced in 6,000 years.

Unless mass-migration becomes the norm, a third of the human population will find itself living in Sahara-like conditions by 2070 if climate pollution continues at current rates. The researchers writing in PNAS found "a strong tension" between where people are expected to live and the climate conditions they have lived in for millennia.

Simultaneous high humidity and temperature are an example of what scientists call a "compound event," when multiple things go haywire. It's an intuitive concept, particularly at a moment when many millions of people are heading into summer heat, hurricane and wildfire seasons under the cloud of pandemic.

"We already have enough evidence before a study like this, clearly, of the systemic, existential risks in a world where we don't reduce our carbon emissions," Horton said. "This is another line of evidence."

Life & Style

Telethon raises $115M for New Yorkers impacted by COVID-19

NEW YORK (AP)—Tina Fey shed tears after announcing that more than $115 million was raised toward supporting New Yorkers impacted by COVID-19 during a virtual telethon.

"Thank you, thank you," said a tearful Fey, the host of the Rise Up New York! event Monday evening. The Emmy-winning actress along with other A-list celebrities from Barbra Streisand, Jennifer Lopez and Michael Strahan asked for donations to help relief and recovery efforts.

"Our city is under attack, but we've been here before," Robert De Niro said. "In the last 20 years, both 9/11 and Hurricane Sandy. You can take your best shot but you cannot break our spirit."

The one-hour benefit was presented by the New York-based poverty fighting organization, Robin Hood, and iHeartMedia.

Robin Hood said all the donations will provide support for food, shelter, cash assistance, mental health, legal services and education.

"If you had breakfast today, you are better off than 2 million of your neighbors who woke up hungry," Fey said.

Fey

Mariah Carey performed her 1992 song "Make It Happen." She sang while her backup singers and pianist performed on separate screens to the upbeat tune.

"We can make it through this together," Carey said.

Lin-Manuel Miranda, Cynthia Erivo, Idina Menzel, Ben Platt and others performed a rendition of Frank Sinatra's classic song "New York, New York." Lopez introduced PS22 Chorus, a collection of New York elementary school students who sang Andra Day's "Rise Up."

"New York, I know your strength," said Lopez, a New York native.

Spike Lee shared encouraging words that sports would return someday soon. Streisand and Audra McDonald showed the same optimism about New York City's Theater District coming back "stronger than ever" after being closed due to the pandemic lockdown.

New York Giants greats including Strahan, Eli Manning, Phil Simms and Justin Tuck announced an opportunity through a sweepstakes for one fan to play a game of touch football with the players in their own backyard and get a Super Bowl ring. The winner of the sweepstakes and three friends will have a chance to play against the players.

Other musical performances included Sting's "Message in a Bottle" and Bon Jovi's "It's My Life."

Billy Joel closed out the benefit performing "Miami 2017" after being introduced by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo. The performance was simultaneously shown on 13 of Time Square's digital billboards. A choreographed lighting show debuted at the Empire State Building that will repeat at 9 p.m. EST throughout the week.

Cannes is empty, the day the film festival should have begun

CANNES, France (AP)—The stars stayed home, their beach backdrop is closed and the prestigious grounds of the Cannes Film Festival have been repurposed as a homeless shelter.

Cannes should have been buzzing with cinema glitterati on Tuesday, which was scheduled as the first day of this year's film festival. But during the time of the coronavirus, the French Riviera resort is nothing but a ghost town.

The world's biggest film festival was canceled for the first time since World War II.

A couple of mask-wearing residents sit on the edge of the empty promenade to catch the morning sun, dangling their feet above the sand and next to an "Access and Swimming Prohibited" sign. An elderly group play petanque quietly next to the deserted roads.

The iconic billboard reserved for each year's festival poster instead framed a large "THANK YOU" for the health workers caring for people during the pandemic.

"I'm overcome with a great sense of melancholy and nostalgia," Cannes Delegate General Thierry Fremaux told Screen Daily about the festival going dark. "Cannes has only ever been canceled once, due to the Second World War, and stopped once, in May '68.

"I could never have imagined something like this. Who could foresee that so many countries around the world would be caught out by the epidemic?" Fremaux said.

While the cancellation represents a blow to the movie stars and directors it promotes and honors, it has also devastated the legions of businesses and unsung subcontractors that rely on the Cannes Film Festival.

"For us, it's really a very big loss. The festival represents a large part of our annual revenues so it's very serious problem," said Joseph Rappa, owner of a snack-vending kiosk.

For others, it's even worse.

Pierre Dambrine works building film stands inside the Palais des Festivals, the retro building complex in which the screenings and awards ceremonies take place.

"There is no more work at all. We don't know at all when things will resume," Dambrine said.

The local government repurposed the festival's building complex as a shelter in March. Every day, dozens of homeless people can be seen walking in a fenced-off area where journalists interviewed actors such as Marion Cotillard and Leonardo DiCaprio.

Some shops started reopening in France on Monday. In Cannes, some high-end boutiques such as Valentino and Saint Laurent were set to open their doors again from Tuesday, but the mood was gray. The famous Hotel Martinez, where many of Cannes' stars stay during the 12-day event, will remain closed for at least one more month.

Two women sit above the deserted Croisette beach due to measures put in place to stop the spread of the coronavirus in Cannes, southern France, Tuesday, May 12, 2020. AP

Fremaux has expressed pessimism about the immediate future of the film industry, but said it would rebound.

He said the cancellation of the 2020 events won't stop the festival from recognizing film talent, and Cannes organizers plan to announce an Official Selection for this year at the beginning of June.

Mom vetoes grandma's plan to flout distancing rules

DEAR ABBY: My parents have strong opinions. I don't agree with them in areas such as how to raise or discipline my children. If I try to explain why, they mock me with their tone of voice. Then they get mad if I try to discuss it with them and won't speak to me for a couple of weeks.

Currently, they are insisting that I am making a mountain out of a molehill because of the coronavirus. I stay at home with my children and run out only to buy food. Abby, my parents are ignoring all the health recommendations. They still go out in public places where people are close to each other.

They now want to have all their grandkids over to play and are upset with me because I refuse. It has reached the point that I don't answer my phone when I see Mom's number because I know she'll lecture me on how I am "tearing the family apart over this nonsense that we'll just laugh about next year." How do you get family members to respect your request for social distancing?

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR NOW

DEAR DOING: Here's how: Stick to your guns. Remind your mother that your children's welfare is your sacred responsibility. It is your job to ensure their safety, and it's no laughing matter. Tell her this is why you have chosen to follow the directions issued by the Centers for Disease Control. You wish she and your dad would be more careful about their own health, but you respect that they are adults making their own choices, and you expect that she will extend to you the same courtesy. Period!

DEAR ABBY: I recently gave a family member a gift. Immediately upon opening it, they exclaimed, "I don't want this! I will never use this. Can I return it and get something else?" This was followed by repeatedly saying they didn't want the item and dragging out of the closet a similar item another family member had given them, exclaiming, "See? I already have almost the exact same thing, and I've never used it."

This relative kept repeating they didn't ever want anything like this and what I should always get them. This is the same person, by the way, who buys me whatever they want to get me whether I want it or not, and refuses to listen when I state what I would like as gifts. Am I too sensitive, or is this behavior bad manners?

GIFT HORSE IN WYOMING

DEAR GIFT HORSE: It's an example of appalling bad manners and lack of gratitude. Because the relative is also unwilling or unable to choose appropriate gifts, why not agree to stop exchanging them? In cases like this, a nice, neutral greeting card would cause fewer hurt feelings.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I disagree about something, and I'd like you to be the tie-breaker. One of us believes it's proper to keep the title to a vehicle in the glove compartment of the vehicle alongside the registration and insurance papers. The other thinks it's foolish and dangerous. What say you? -- TIE-BREAKER IN KENTUCKY

DEAR TIE-BREAKER: I say it is better to err on the side of caution and keep the title in a safe deposit box or file cabinet. The same is true for the deed to your home, as well as other important documents.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

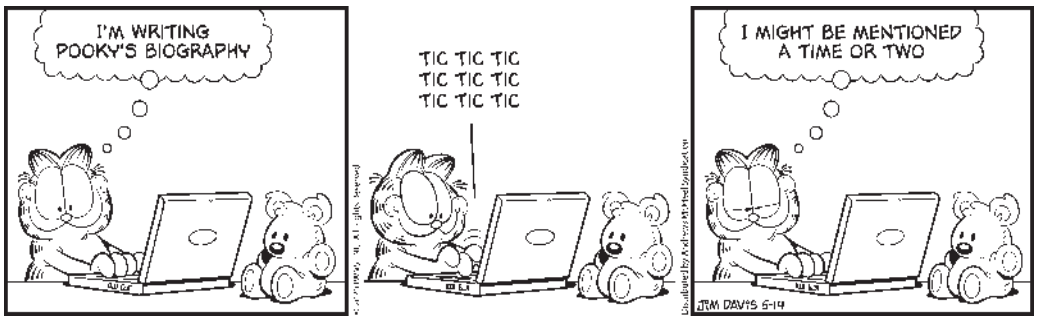
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

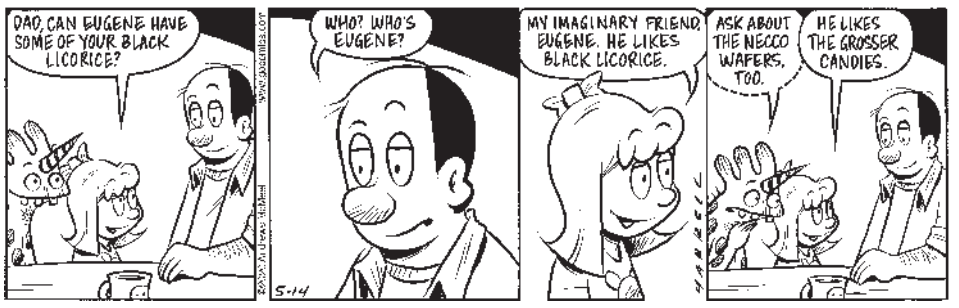
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



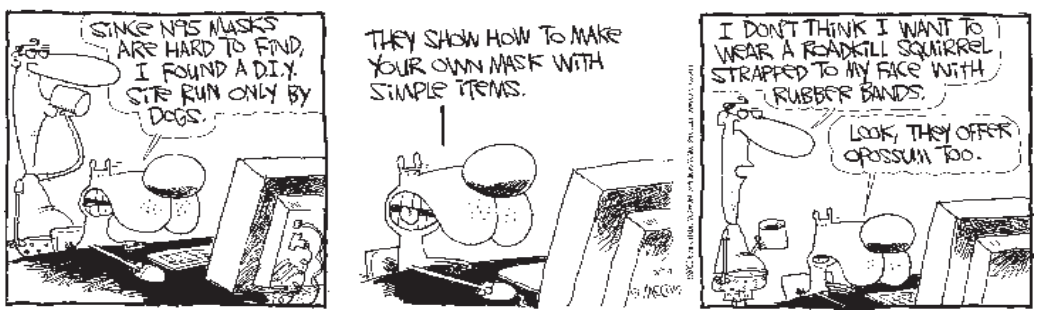
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


DAD, CAN EUGENE HAVE SOME OF YOUR BLACK LICORICE?
WHO? WHO'S EUGENE?
MY IMAGINARY FRIEND, EUGENE. HE LIKES BLACK LICORICE.
ASK ABOUT THE NECCO WAFERS, TOO.
HE LIKES THE GROSSER CANDIES.
5-14

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


SINCE N95 MASKS ARE HARD TO FIND, I FOUND A D.I.Y. SITE RUN ONLY BY DOGS.
THEY SHOW HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN MASK WITH SIMPLE ITEMS.
I DON'T THINK I WANT TO WEAR A ROADKILL SQUIRREL STRAPPED TO MY FACE WITH RUBBER BANDS.
LOOK, THEY OFFER OPOSSUM TOO.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 "Legally Blonde" role
5 Gator's kin
9 Boom times
12 Former queen of Jordan
13 Verdi opera
14 Word of denial
15 Australia
17 Payable
18 Braces (oneself)
19 Critic Roger
21 Ave. crosser
22 Early Mongolian
24 Datum
27 Moo — pork
28 Scored 100 on
31 Buckeyes' sch.
32 Corral
33 Ms. Thurman
34 "Little Women" sister
36 Astern
37 Molecule part
38 Over-cooked
40 Harris or Asner
41 Extra
43 Broken arm supports
47 Varnish ingredient
48 Retreats
51 Annoy
52 Sci-fi race
53 Region
54 Score units (Abbr.)
55 Boxer Spinks
56 Crooned

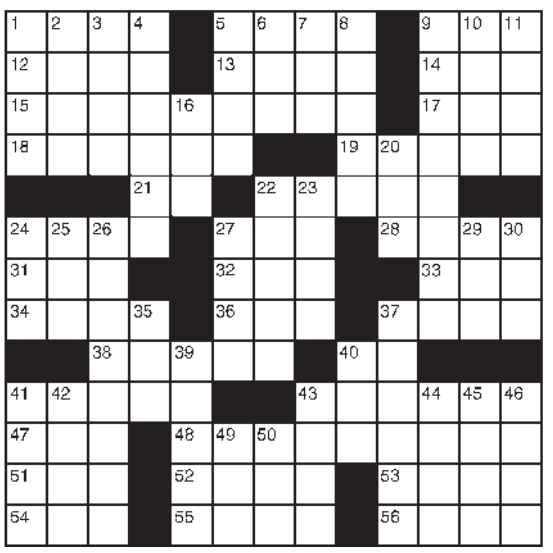
DOWN

1 Termini
2 Booty
3 Actor Rob
4 Papa Heming-way
5 Six-pack units
6 Abolish
7 Poetic tribute
8 Insertion mark
9 Charge much less than
10 Serve beer
11 Editor's "keep it"
16 Last (Abbr.)
20 Cote cry
22 It's a crime
23 Cousin's mom
24 Watch chain
25 Enzyme ending
26 Reduc-tions
27 Bridge
29 Punk-rock subgenre
30 River blocker
35 "Ben- —"
37 Nike rival
39 Defy authority
40 Overhead trains
41 Faux pas
42 Section
43 Epidermis
44 Writer Ephron
45 Verdon or Stefani
46 Unfore-seen problem
49 Hearty brew
50 Bill's partner

Solution time: 24 mins.

A	S	T	A	■	P	A	S	■	A	F	E	W
L	E	A	P	■	U	L	T	■	N	I	L	E
S	A	Y	H	E	L	L	O	■	G	N	A	T
O	N	E	I	L	L	■	C	L	E	A	N	S
■	■	■	C	A	M	■	K	I	L	L	■	■
P	E	I	■	L	A	P	■	L	I	S	T	S
E	L	M	O	■	N	O	S	■	C	A	R	S
P	L	U	M	E	■	D	I	S	■	Y	E	W
■	■	S	E	M	■	■	L	I	S	■	■	■
G	A	I	L	I	N	■	L	A	Y	E	R	S
E	L	S	E	■	S	A	Y	G	R	A	C	E
A	M	A	T	■	U	L	M	■	I	R	A	N
R	A	Y	S	■	M	A	F	■	A	S	S	T

Yesterday's answer 5-14



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Miranda Cosgrove, 27; Cate Blanchett, 51; Tim Roth, 59; George Lucas, 76.

Happy Birthday: Look for the positive aspects in life, and you'll encounter opportunities that will encourage you to try something new. Life is what you make it, and you are the one responsible for your happiness. Focus on personal growth, health and overall day-to-day maintenance. Make a point to expand your mind and your interests and to associate with people who enhance your life. Your numbers are 7, 13, 21, 24, 33, 42, 46.

ARIES *(March21-April 19):* Share your thoughts and feelings. Look at every angle, and contribute something positive. Extend warmth and compassion toward those in need of a pick-me-up, and you will feel good. Strengthen your relationship with someone you love. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Do your due diligence, find out whatever you can about everyone and everything. The more information you gather, the better prepared you will be when it's time to negotiate. Keep an open mind; anger will not help you get ahead. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* A romantic connection looks promising but challenging due to misunderstandings. Be honest, upfront and consistent, and you'll avoid sending the wrong message. Take an opportunity to do more talking, and find out what makes others tick. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Be inventive; it will help you take advantage of the lifestyle changes that are in place. Don't let what you've done in the past deter you from adopting the new norm. Activity, fitness, learning and exploring new possibilities are favored. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* You'll get a lucky break if you retrace your steps. Set up a conference call with someone you've worked with before. What you have to offer will draw interest and can set the pace for what's to come. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Settle down, and ease into the necessary changes and the economic adjustments that are required. You'll make progress if you are sensitive to what others need or want. Compensations, along with incentives, will help prompt others to do things your way. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Concentrate on personal growth, not meddling in someone else's business. A positive direction will make you a better person. Stick to your plan, but don't rely on others to help. A kind gesture or word will enhance your relationship with someone special. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Stop worrying about everyone else, and do the things you enjoy. The people who want to share with you will ask to be a part of the challenges you face. Don't let an emotional matter lead to a lack of discipline. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Enjoy spending more time with someone you love. Conversations will help you get to know each other. Refuse to let outsiders disrupt your life. Truth matters; verify information offered before you take action. Speak from the heart. ✪✪✪✪

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		3		2		
	5				3	
6		7		9		4
2	1		9		7		5
4	3		1		2		9
	9		1		5		3	
		2				6		
			6		4			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

7	5	9	8	3	2	1	4	6
6	3	4	1	5	7	9	8	2
2	8	1	9	6	4	7	5	3
8	9	3	7	2	1	5	6	4
5	7	2	6	4	9	3	1	8
4	1	6	3	8	5	2	9	7
9	2	8	5	7	6	4	3	1
3	4	5	2	1	8	6	7	9
1	6	7	4	9	3	8	2	5

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EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* You won't get away with anything. Someone who cares about you will want to step in and take over. Listen to advice offered, but make it clear that it's you who must make a decision. Do what's right and best for everyone. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* You'll face opposition and manipulative people. Don't feel pressured to decide if you aren't ready. Seeing a pressure tactic used should be a warning sign not to give in to manipulation. Take the initiative to do what will bring you the highest return. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Get rid of any negative thoughts, and look for the positive in whatever situation you find yourself facing. Look at the big picture, and you'll know what changes you need to put in place to keep your life moving forward. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are unique, charming and free-spirited. You are kind and mindful.

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

I'M SOMETIMES TIMID — Solution: 10 letters

S	R	E	G	N	A	R	T	S	S	E	N	Y	H	S
C	T	M	D	L	A	I	C	O	S	H	S	U	R	C
A	U	S	I	E	A	A	E	T	A	T	I	S	E	H
R	R	L	A	L	R	C	E	L	D	R	U	H	J	O
E	M	E	R	E	D	D	I	O	Y	O	G	F	E	O
D	O	R	F	F	L	Ⓚ	W	T	I	N	E	E	C	L
B	I	U	A	O	Ⓡ	N	R	C	I	S	T	R	T	G
A	L	M	C	Ⓞ	P	A	S	T	N	R	B	U	I	N
S	L	E	Ⓦ	L	P	N	A	E	L	L	C	S	O	I
H	U	D	A	A	O	R	K	A	O	E	E	N	N	L
F	F	Y	W	C	T	C	T	C	T	E	I	U	Q	B
U	R	E	F	S	I	N	K	H	M	S	S	O	B	M
L	A	L	U	H	E	S	P	E	A	K	I	N	G	E
K	E	R	C	M	D	E	V	R	E	S	E	R	E	R
S	F	R	I	G	H	T	E	N	E	D	O	U	B	T

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Afraid, Aloof, Bashful, Block, Boss, Careful, Chicken, Cold, Critical, Crush, Demure, Doubt, Downplay, Fearful, Frightened, Frustrating, Hesitate, Hurdle, Mental, Mild, Party, Quiet, Rejection, Reserved, Scared, School, Self-conscious, Shyness, Social, Speaking, Strangers, Teacher, Tense, Trembling, Turmoil, Unsure, Weak, Work

Yesterday's Answer: Flavorful

The NEW **Treasury 39** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

NBA players show desire to play, if safe

AP
In this Dec. 25, 2019 file photo, Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James (23) and Los Angeles Clippers' Kawhi Leonard (2) chase the ball during an NBA game in Los Angeles.

MIAMI (AP)—A person familiar with the results of poll of NBA players taken by their union says there would be "overwhelming" support for any plan that has this season resuming in a safe way amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The poll conducted by the National Basketball Players Association was informal but gave a clear sense that players would like to not only get to the playoffs but also resume at least some of the regular season, according to the person who shared details with The Associated Press on Tuesday on condition of anonymity because it was not to be detailed publicly.

The exact results of the poll were unknown, and the methodology behind the poll— including how many players participated—was unclear.

The NBPA sent a letter to agents Tuesday discussing, among other things, the results of the player polling and some details of the call the union and its membership had late last week with NBA Commissioner Adam Silver. In that call, Silver talked about the possibility of resuming a season without fans and potentially playing at a centralized site—notions that have been discussed for some time.

There are numerous hurdles to clear to get games back, the need for testing of players and staff when play resumes among them, and what could be viewed as positive signs Tuesday were just that—signs, not absolute indicators that there is a path for a return to play this season.

Golden State coach Steve Kerr, whose team wouldn't be headed to the playoffs and was preparing to play home games in an empty arena because of the virus threat before the league suspended the season, told radio station 95.7 The Game in the Bay Area on Tuesday that he believes the Warriors' season is over.

"We'll be good soldiers. If the league asks us to play more games, we'll play," Kerr said. "I don't anticipate that happening, but we'll be ready if it does. And in the meantime, you know, it's not my decision, it's not our decision—it's the NBA's decision, what to do, when to do it."

NBA players had somewhat different reactions. Memphis' Ja Morant, the likely front-runner for rookie of the year, tweeted that he wants to play. And Orlando guard Evan Fournier said international soccer inching toward a return "gives me hope" that the NBA can do the same.

"Everybody in the league, we want to finish this year," Cleveland's Larry Nance Jr. said earlier Tuesday. "One, obviously because we love the game, but at the same time there's a serious chance of us missing out on, what, 20-plus percent of our contracts, which is for a lot of guys pretty significant."

The NBA suspended its season on March 11 with 259 regular season games remaining, or roughly one-fifth of the season.

Players have been paid in full on each of the four paydays that have followed, though that will change Friday when most of the league sees a 25% reduction in their paycheck.

Players stand to lose roughly $850 million in gross salary if the regular season is not resumed and the NBA exercises its right to withhold roughly 1.08% of each player's salary for any game that is ultimately canceled. On average, that would mean each NBA player stands to lose about 21% of his total salary. No games have been officially canceled yet; the 25% reduction starting with Friday's check was negotiated between the league and the union with the expectation that the season will eventually be shortened.

A handful of teams have opened their facilities for voluntary workouts; Miami and Orlando are expected to be the next two teams to do so on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the Southern California sports academy previously co-owned by Kobe Bryant has retired his "Mamba" nickname and rebranded itself nearly four months after the basketball icon's death in a helicopter crash.

Bryant, his 13-year-old daughter Gianna and seven other people were killed Jan. 26 as they flew to a basketball tournament at the Mamba Sports Academy.

The Thousand Oaks-based facility said it would return to its original name of Sports Academy. It was founded in 2016. Bryant, who spent 20 seasons with the Los Angeles Lakers and helped the franchise win five NBA championships, joined in 2018.

Games were being played at the academy when the news broke of Bryant's death. Players immediately stopped and many people in the gym burst into tears when told that Bryant was aboard the helicopter that crashed.

The academy is under consideration as a home base for an NBA minor league program that will provide one year of preparation, on and off the court.

Jordan still talks trash to Ewing

NEW YORK—We all have that one person in our lives who won't let us live something down that happened years and years ago.

For Patrick Ewing, that guy is Michael Jordan.

Ewing joined Rachel Nichols on "The Jump" on Monday to discuss The Last Dance and revealed he's still hearing about how MJ always beat him when it mattered most.

"He's been talking trash from the first day that I met him and he still continues to talk trash, telling me that I have never beat him when it counts," Ewing said on "The Jump."

If you dominate a peer time and time again, why not rub it in?

Jordan and Ewing met five times in the playoffs. And five times Jordan and the Bulls beat Ewing and the Knicks. In fact, the only time Ewing was able to make it past the Bulls in the playoffs was in 1994, with Jordan in the middle of his first retirement. Even then, Pippen and company pushed the Knicks to seven games.

"It still hasn't stopped," Ewing said. "If I call him right now, he'll still be talking trash to me."

No wonder Ewing hasn't been watching all of The Last Dance.

Barkley: MJ bullies easy targets

Charles Barkley respects Jordan's ability, but not his methods. Barkley called out Jordan on Tuesday, saying Jordan only bullied certain teammates because he knew they wouldn't fight back.

Barkley lobbed that criticism at Jordan during an appearance on "The Dan Le Batard Show With Stugotz." Barkley said Jordan has "selective prosecution" when it comes to bullying teammates.

What does that mean? It means Jordan only picked on guys who wouldn't "whoop the hell out of you," according to Barkley.

Jordan's bullying techniques were a major focus of Episode 7 of The Last Dance, which aired Sunday. During the episode, a number of Jordan's teammates weigh in on whether Jordan was a good guy. The episode also features clips of Jordan verbally berating teammates, particularly Scott Burrell.

Burrell and Jordan never came to blows, though that wasn't the case with all Jordan's teammates. Jordan and Steve Kerr got into a fight during practice. Kerr has talked about the fight, saying it improved his relationship with Jordan. Their scuffle was covered during Episode 8 of The Last Dance.

Given how much Jordan went after teammates, it wouldn't be a surprise if he challenged plenty of big men during his career. Perhaps Barkley would feel differently if Jordan threw punches at Charles Oakley instead of Kerr but, as far as the public knows, that didn't happen.

Great teammate

Jordan welcoming Scott Burrell to the Bulls set the tone for his tenure with the team

"'Hey, Scott Burrell, you thought the best part of your trade was you don't have to play against me four times a year now? Now you have to be with me every day."

That's how Burrell remembered it in an appearance on Sports Talk Live, hosted by David Kaplan. Jordan's brutal behind-the-scenes treatment of Burrell marked a flashpoint series of moments in Episode 7 of The Last Dance—a stretch that was highly-anticipated because of comments from Jordan that circulated before the documentary's release expressing concern that he would be perceived as a "horrible guy" by its end.

His riding of Burrell certainly lived up to expectation. It's apparent that Jordan pulled out every trick in the ridicule book to denigrate Burrell, from harsh name-calling to excessive defensive pestering in practice.

Jordan explained his tyrannical methods as intended to motivate his teammates to reach their highest potential as players, and prepare them for the most grueling moments of the NBA calendar (the playoffs). And no matter how out-of-line Jordan's actions appear from an outside perspective, they worked. His six rings are evidence of that, as are the crucial contributions the Bulls received from role players up and down the roster en route to them.

Burrell, for his part, harbors no ill will at all towards Jordan. Asked by Kaplan if Jordan was a great teammate, his answer was steadfast.

"100 percent," Burrell said. "People are afraid of getting challenged now, and they think if you get challenged it's in a negative way, so I have to combat that or I have to find a way to attack them. Accept criticism. Accept it and use it in your favor, and learn from it. ***(NBC)***

Manning not considering NFL coaching

NEW YORK—Eli Manning is taking a year off and enjoying retirement. Then, he vows to figure out what's next.

"I really wanted to try to take a year off and just try to gather my bearings and get settled with my family and figure out what I want to do in that next chapter," Manning told 115 military members on a USO Zoom call last week, via Jordan Raanan of ESPN. "I know one thing: I don't want to be an NFL coach. I've seen what our coaches do and the hours they put in, and I enjoy being with my family and enjoy coaching some of their sports teams."

He has not ruled out coaching at the lower levels, though. Or broadcasting. Or working for the Giants in some capacity.

Manning spent all 16 seasons with the Giants.

"Football is my love and passion," Manning said. "It is all I've known for the last 25 years and all I've been doing. I don't think I can stray too far away from that. I'd like to hope to do something with the Giants, stay involved with them. I probably need a little break right now just because it's so new. So I'm going to take a little time, enjoy some family time, but I assume I'll be jumping back into football in some way.

"I don't know if I want to do announcing . . . yet. Or go into that field. I might want to stay more hands-on with either the Giants or some coaching with a high school team."

AP

In this Dec. 15, 2019 file photo, New York Giants quarterback Eli Manning (10) signals to teammates during the second half of an NFL game against the Miami Dolphins in East Rutherford, N.J.

Giants offense a lot like Cowboys

Daniel Jones had better start watching videotape of the Dallas Cowboys' offense.

New coach Joe Judge said the Giants' offense this season would like like the one the Cowboys ran the past decade with Jason Garrett as the head coach.

Garrett's contract with Dallas was not renewed after last season and Judge hired him as his offensive coordinator less than two weeks later.

"There's going be some similarities, but it's got to cater to our players we have on our roster currently," Judge said Tuesday in a video conference call. "So right now we're installing all the base concepts and the shell of the offense. I think really you'll see through our training camps as it takes form with the character of our team and as different players emerge."

Judge said the offense will vary by game depending on the opponent. Jones, who was the sixth pick overall in last year's draft, may throw more one game and Saquon Barkley might carry the load the next.

The system is not the West Coast brand coach Pat Shurmur employed the past two seasons. Manning ran it the first year and Jones, the sixth pick overall in 2019, replaced the two-time Super Bowl MVP after the second game last season.

"One thing that Jason does that's really outstanding is it's really his system that's been formed over years collectively from where he's played and coached," Judge said. "And those are part of the conversations we had when we talked about him joining the staff.

Jones will see some similarities with some things he knows because all systems have some concepts that are similar.

Judge said the same concept will be true for defensive coordinator Pat Graham, who ran the Dolphins' defense last season. It will be multiple formations with parts of the systems Graham used in Miami, New England, New York, Houston and Tennessee.

Judge, a special teams coordinator in New England in recent years, said will be involved in all three areas.

With the coronavirus pandemic preventing teams from holding organized team activities, Judge said his biggest concerns is keeping his players healthy. His hope is they can find a way to stay in shape so they can compete when team training facilities open.

There has been some speculation that some states may not ease restrictions in time for training camp to open. The Giants train at their team headquarters in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Without naming any potential sites for an away training camp, Judge said the Giants have discussed the possibility of training at a different site.

Still, he hopes to train at the team's headquarters.

"To be honest with you, if we can't practice in the facility, I would just like it to be the best setup possible," he said. "There's a lot of factors that go into that in terms of field space, training room, weight room, food for the players room and accommodations. You know, these guys have off days and training camp as well. One of the advantages of having it at our facility is these guys have a chance, go home and see their wives and kids as well on the off days, which look, that's a big part of it." ***(AP/NBC)***

Patriots still favored to land free agent Newton

NEW ENGLAND—Cam Newton surprisingly remains unsigned on the NFL's free agent market.

The 2015 league MVP was released by the Carolina Panthers in March, and despite several teams entering free agency in need of a quarterback, Newton still hasn't found a home.

One concern teams might have about Newton is his durability. He missed the last 14 games of the 2019 season because of a foot injury. Newton also has taken plenty of hits throughout his nine-year career as a quarterback who's not afraid to escape the pocket and use his legs to make plays in the open field. He's among the best dual-threat QBs of his generation. The counterargument to the durability concern is that before last season Newton had missed just five games in his first eight seasons with the Panthers.

It's also difficult for teams to do physicals with players at this time due to COVID-19.

Still, there's no question Newton remains a starting-caliber quarterback at age 31. In 2018 he completed 67.9 percent of his passes for 3,395 yards with 24 touchdowns and 13 interceptions, in addition to 488 rushing yards and another four touchdowns.

So, which teams could be in the mix for Newton? Oddsmakers still like the New England Patriots as the betting favorites to land the veteran quarterback.

The only two quarterbacks on New England's depth chart, aside from undrafted free agents, are Jarrett Stidham and Brian Hoyer. Stidham has shown a lot of potential in the limited preseason and regular season reps he got as a rookie, but he's still very much an unknown. Hoyer, meanwhile, is best suited as a backup. The Patriots aren't making the playoffs if Hoyer has to start the majority of next season's games.

Perhaps the main obstacle in signing Newton is the limited salary cap space the Patriots have at their disposal. Unless Newton is willing to accept an inexpensive contract, it's hard to imagine the Patriots being in the mix to sign him with just a little bit more than $1 million in cap space (as of this writing).

The Patriots are unlikely to be legitimate Super Bowl contenders in 2020 with or without Newton, so the best option for New England probably is to just roll with Stidham and find out if he can be a quality NFL starter.

Meanwhile, the Seattle Seahawks and Los Angeles Rams are possible destinations for the 2010 Heisman Trophy winner. In Seattle, Newton would serve as insurance incase the iron man Russell Wilson ever goes down.

But in Los Angeles, Newton could have a chance to show he's healthy and perhaps supplant Jared Goff should the 25-year-old struggle. Sean McVay's play-action-oriented offense would fit Newton's style, and Cooper Kupp and Robert Woods would be the best weapons Newton has had in his career.

Goff struggled last season behind a porous offensive line that was ranked 31st by PFF. The Rams did nothing to solve that issue in the offseason, instead choosing to re-sign the aging Andrew Whitworth and hope for a better outcome. None of that bodes well for Goff, who regressed massively after a stellar season in 2018. The Rams paid Goff handsomely and won't be quick to move on from him. But Newton is one of the most talented quarterbacks in the NFL when healthy and the NFC West, led by the 49ers, is murderer's row.

If Goff struggles early and the Rams start to fall out of contention, handing the keys over to a healthy Newton is something McVay would at least have to consider.

In 2019, Goff's play had to make McVay and the Rams cringe, especially after they gave him a king's ransom to be their franchise quarterback. Goff went all of November without throwing a touchdown pass. In an October loss to the 49ers, the Rams totaled just 78 yards. Their high-octane offense had the NOS ripped out of it and Goff was unable to get it back up to speed.

Could Newton give the Rams the jumpstart they need to contend with the 49ers in the NFC West?

As it currently stands, the 49ers and Seahawks are the cream of the crop. The bitter rivals should once again battle until the bitter end for the NFC West title.

The 49ers have the best roster—top to bottom—in the division and it's not close. The Seahawks have the best quarterback and a lot of question marks. ***(NBC)***

LO

From Page 20

for our local players who prepared for the CNMI's first Marianas Cup against Guam. Most of us were older than typical rookies. Training three hours per day, five to six days per week took a toll on us, and Perry was always there to provide treatment to a banged up back, knee, or an ankle with Chinese cupping therapy, and it worked," Ruszala said.

"Most players on our teams looked like dalmatians with the evidence of the cupping all over us," he added.

After the hard training sessions, Lo would also provide the comic relief to players and mixed them up with his stories on life and soccer.

"He gave words of encouragement, attended our games, watched our practices, and would've done absolutely anything for his guys. We're going to miss him. Our younger players never got to know him and his dedication to CNMI soccer. Be that as it may, I'm sure Perry will still be watching over our program from his skybox over the Koblerville pitch," Ruszala added.

Other early members of the CNMI Men's National Team and the islands' residents also recognized Lo's contribution to the Commonwealth's soccer program, as they posted their message of sympathy to the family of the late coach in social media.

"It was a privilege to attend his soccer referee clinic," said Manny Sitchon, a basketball referee, but also tried learning officiating matches at the pitches.

Former CNMI resident Gregory Baka recalled that Lo started youth soccer in 1999 or 2000 at the American Memorial Park with three age groups and four coaches, while Edith Deleon Guerrero thanked him for coaching her children.

The Northern Mariana Islands Football Association also extended its condolences to Lo's family and recognized his help in the development of the sport in the CNMI.

"Perry will always be remembered for his contributions to NMI soccer, especially during the program's formative years. He was one of the first few referees who officiated games on island, making it possible for the NMI to have organized tournaments. His great passion for soccer was evident in the 60-plus years he spent with the sport as a player, coach, and referee," NMIFA said.

Players salary major concern in MLB opening

NEW YORK— Major League Baseball and its players have begun discussing a way to restart the 2020 season following the coronavirus delay. The owners approved a plan on Monday that would restart baseball in July and include a contentious revenue sharing salary system. Negotiations with the Major League Baseball Players Association began with a meeting Tuesday.

Among the many complicated questions that need to be answered: How will players be paid? When and where will games be played?

When will the season start and how many games will be scheduled? What will rosters look like? How will the postseason work?

Health and safety measures

In the first formal dialogue intended to address the details of opening the baseball season in early July, MLB and the players union spent much of Tuesday addressing health and safety protocols and contingencies as they relate to the coronavirus, according to sources.

While the league did present an economic status report, sources said, it did not propose a new salary structure for players. That proposal is expected to seek a 50-50 revenue-sharing agreement between owners and players. Union leaders have said they would reject such a proposal and instead abide by the terms of a late-March agreement, which they believe established a system of prorated salaries.

That showdown did not come to pass Tuesday.

Many players have publicly expressed concerns for themselves, their families and others—coaches, staffs and stadium workers among them—if they were to return ahead of the national curve for testing and care.

The league expressed its preference for playing regular season games in teams' home ballparks. Alternative sites would be chosen in the event certain cities were not in a position to host those games.

MLB owners voted to approve a proposed plan that would start "around Fourth of July weekend without fans," according to the Associated Press, with spring training starting in mid-June.

Getting owners approval is only half the battle. The players union would also need to agree to this plan. MLB officials are scheduled to present their plan to the MLBPA on Tuesday. That part of the negotiations is expected to be more difficult, as a proposed revenue-sharing system is reportedly expected to be a sticking point between the union and ownership.

Revenue sharing

Again, all this needs to be approved by the players union, so this is only the first step in a negotiation toward restarting MLB.

The biggest hurdle will be finding an agreement on player pay. The AP reports that owners want players to get a 50-50 split of revenues during the regular season and postseason. Such a revenue split would be new for baseball and could complicate negotiations.

Reports indicate that MLB will propose a revenue-sharing plan for the 2020 season, in which players would receive a certain cut of the league's revenue in a one-year iteration similar to the NBA or NFL's usual system.

According to multiple reports, MLB will enter the negotiations with numbers showing that fans attending games typically accounts for 51 percent of local revenue and 40 percent of the league's total revenue.

This would be used as evidence the league needs to alter a March agreement to pay players their salaries pro-rated for the number of regular season games that occur.

The league canceled spring training and suspended its season on March 12 as the coronavirus crisis gripped the country. Later in March, MLB and the players association agreed to a series of stipulations to temporarily deal with the financial ramifications of the upended season. Players secured assurances about service time, which determines when a player reaches free agency. The league advanced portions of player salaries, a sum that won't exceed $170 million, and that players will keep if there is no season. In return, the players agreed not to sue for full salaries in the event of a total cancellation. ***(AP/NBC)***

3 GK

From Page 20

keepers. I think a goalkeeper is one of the most important positions in the field and it's something that us, coaches, need to teach to our players, both in club and national level," Ito said.

"We hope to be able to assist better in our national team trainings and increase the number of interest in goalkeeping as well as help in the continued development of our goalkeepers in the national team," said Ito, who also plays as goalie in the 2020 Dove Women's Spring League.

Zapanta echoed Ito's sentiments, saying that with coaches better equipped with the knowledge in goalkeeping, it will be easier for them to reach out to players interested in the position, especially those in the youth league.

"It (course) was insightful because we got more in depth techniques and skills of the goalkeeper and goalkeeper coach, and shared experiences with other coaches. Using what I learned, I hope to improve our goalkeepers in the club from all age divisions," Zapanta said.

"We hope to get more players interested in the position because it is not a popular position and some do not understand its importance in the game. I play as a goalkeeper in the M-League, and with practice I am sure I can be a better player as well," he added.

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

The CNMI's Angie Ito shares her thoughts during the classroom session of the Asian Football Confederation Level 1 Goalkeeping Coaching Course held at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Harmon early this year.

The course completed by Zapanta, Ito, and Poon and conducted by the former Japan National Team player and professional goalkeeper featured classroom sessions, practical sessions with assessments, and a theory exam. Qualified course participants were coaches who must have at least an AFC "C" Coaching Certificate or equivalent, as approved by AFC.

The AFC Level 1 Goalkeeping Coaching Certificate is the first of three in a tiered education system under the zone. To be an official goalkeeper coach at the U16 to senior international level, coaches must have at least the Level 2 certificate this year through 2021, according to the AFC Competitions Operations Manual 2019 Edition 2. By 2022, goalkeeper coaches must have a Level 3 certificate.

Besides Zapanta, Ito, and Poon, 10 Guam coaches also received the AFC certificate. The list includes Chima Mbakwem, Pution Mendiola, Chyna Ramirez, Kimberly Sherman, Ralph Awa, Robert Becker, Ashley Besagar, Julius Campos, Shawn Gumataotao, and Gary Larkin.

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Raymond Zapanta goes for a save during a drill conducted by Asian Football Confederation Instructor Yoshio Kato in the AFC Level 1 Goalkeeping Coaching Course held at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Harmon early this year.

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Kwok Kei Poon, second left, joins fellow coaches in performing drills during the Asian Football Confederation Level 1 Goalkeeping Coaching Course held at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Harmon early this year.

NBA players show desire to play, if safe

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Sports

Manning not considering NFL coaching

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3 GK coaches get AFC certification

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroy

The CNMI's soccer program continues to get a boost, as three coaches passed the Asian Football Confederation Level 1 Goalkeeping Coaching Course held in Guam early this year.

Angie Ito, Raymond Zapanta, and Kwok Kei Poon were among the 13 coaches awarded with the AFC Level 1 Goalkeeping Coaching Certificate after making the grade in the course conducted by AFC Instructor Yoshio Kato of Japan at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Harmon last Jan. 31. Ito works with the CNMI women's national team program and also helps out Northern Mariana Islands Football Association members, while Zapanta plays goalie in the M-League and coaches a local club, too. Poon is from Chelsea FC Soccer School Hong Kong, but has been visiting Saipan regularly to give assistance to the program, especially for goalkeepers.

Ito thanked NMIFA, GFA, and the AFC for providing licensed coaches like them the opportunity to learn more about goalkeeping so they can share them to players and encourage more to try playing one of the crucial spots on a team.

"As a national team coach, I've seen the struggle finding players who want to play goal-

See 3 GK on Page 19

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Front row, from left, Kwok Kei Poon, Angie Ito, and Raymond Zapanta join fellow coaches and Asian Football Confederation Instructor Yoshio Kato, back row, fifth left, of Japan for a group photo during a break in their AFC Level 1 Goalkeeping Coaching Course held at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Harmon early this year.

GUAM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

The CNMI's Angie Ito gets ready to catch the ball during a practical session in the Asian Football Confederation Level 1 Goalkeeping Coaching Course held at the Guam Football Association National Training Center in Harmon early this year.

Soccer community remembers Lo

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Members of the CNMI soccer community paid tribute to Perry Lo, who passed away last May 7.

"Perry left a legacy in the soccer community. He was not only a skilled soccer player but had the characteristics of a great teacher," said former MP United Football Club goalie and umpire Rachel Sablan. She remembers how Lo, who was very active in the sport at a time when it was just starting to gain ground, lending his time and expertise to players and competitions, would make pointers on matches.

"While he watched on the sidelines and back when I used to umpire games, he would give me pointers on how to improve my calls. He didn't' criticize me and instead he made me understand what I did wrong and how I can correct it. He always made a presence on and off the pitch. He will be greatly missed," Sablan said.

Brad Ruszala, a member of the first CNMI Men's National Team, recalled how Lo assisted them in their preparation for the historic Marianas Cup in 2007.

"His passion for the sport was rivaled only by his love

See LO on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Perry Lo, right, seen here staying close on defense against a younger player during a local tournament at the Oleai Sports Complex Field in 2014, passed away last May 7. He was 77.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Discrimination infodemic

From the moment we heard of the coronavirus or COVID-19 everyone shared their personal thoughts and opinions. Information spread like wildfire with panic and fear behind each story. The infodemic or the information epidemic surrounding the virus has caused more damage than the actual coronavirus pandemic itself.

From panic buying, hoarding supplies, and sharing every information received on social media, to the fear and discrimination toward people of Asian descent, individuals who traveled and first responders grew. Although it may seem justifiable from our own points of view, we do not realize the real damage it causes.

As defined by Merriam Webster's dictionary, stigma is a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something. For example, assuming a certain group of people caused the coronavirus to spread. Stigma is dangerous because it can cause people to hide their symptoms and/or illness and hinder them from seeking appropriate medical care. Stigma is caused when we form our own opinions instead of fact-checking and holding our own selves accountable.

The best way to prevent stigma is to know and share the correct facts. Visit reliable sources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization and fact-check before sharing information with the public. Being aware and knowing what to share is a step toward recovery from the discrimination infodemic. Instead of sharing panic and fear, let us help each other by spreading accurate information.

For more information about the protections and advocacy for people who are being discriminated against due to assumed disability, contact the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. (NMPASI) at (670) 235-7273/4 or visit us on the web at www.nmpasi.org, www.facebook.com/NMPASI., and follow us on Instagram @nmpasi670.

Dawn Margaret S. Sablan is a projects specialist at the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems Inc.

Social distancing isn't a religion

Forgive Jacksonville, Florida, for it has sinned.

The largest city in Florida partly reopened its beaches, and it became something of a national scandal. CNN ran a disapproving segment, and the hashtag #FloridaMorons trended on Twitter.

As the CNN report put it: "The scene at Jacksonville Beach wasn't one of caution in the middle of a worldwide pandemic. Crowds cheered and flooded the beach when police took the barriers down. People were seen swimming, biking, surfing, running and fishing."

None of these activities has been shown to be a vector for the spread of COVID-19; in fact, no outdoors activities have been shown to be dangerous at all. A recent study examined hundreds of outbreaks and traced only one to an outdoor environment.

Surfers and bikers are the least of our worries. Yet, there is a segment of American opinion that takes it as its responsibility to scold and shame anyone who dares go out and get a little fresh air.

Early on in the crisis, CNN anchors spent 20 minutes inveighing against people walking, running, biking and rollerblading along San Francisco's Embarcadero. Noting that some people were holding hands, Jake Tapper called it "enraging." Of course, random strangers don't hold hands, but people who are likely in close proximity whether they are enjoying a stroll or not.

Despite there being no indication that outdoor spaces abet the spread of the disease, parks have been shut down throughout the United States, and the closures are at times enforced with rigor. No less than Tom Brady was chased from a closed Tampa Bay park after he was discovered working out, apparently alone. A father in Colorado was briefly detained by police for the alleged offense of playing T-ball with his 6-year-old daughter on a softball field.

A sure sign of fanaticism is the inability to make distinctions, in this instance between risky and non-risky activities and between places hard hit and places not. It's one thing to hold a daylong, 100-person family reunion in a public park, quite another to jog through one. It's one thing to begin opening up in New York City, where there have been more than 10,000 deaths, and another to begin opening in Montana, where there have been 14.

Jacksonville, Florida is the seat of Duval County. With a population of nearly a million people, the county has had 17 COVID-19 deaths. It is hardly a hot spot.

At least some of the spleen would be taken out of the coronavirus debate if people acknowledged that we live in a vast continental country, with radically different ways of life. Not only are not all states the same, not all counties within states are the same.

But such is the lockdown zealotry that any thought that these kinds of places should be treated differently is considered heresy sure to get people killed. It seems indisputable that the lockdowns have slowed the spread of the disease, but at an enormous economic cost. We are going to have to show some flexibility and be willing to adopt a patchwork approach to opening up around the country.

We can't be beholden to public officials and commentators who, to paraphrase H.L. Mencken, have the haunting fear that someone, somewhere may be rollerblading.'

By RICH LOWRY
King Features Synd., Inc.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

Nation must prepare to vote by mail

The more we learn about COVID-19, the more likely it seems most of us will be voting by mail this fall. Voting in person has become, and will likely remain, too dangerous.

Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, Colorado and Utah have long been voting by mail. California now says it will join them, and other states are likely to follow.

What's needed is a national commitment to voting by mail. Under this system, all registered voters would receive a postpaid ballot. They can then make their choices, sign the ballot, seal an interior envelope and send it back.

But for this to happen nationwide this fall, we must start working now.

First, we need to push back against the purging of voter rolls. Investigative reporter Greg Palast estimates some 17 million citizens have already been removed in advance of the 2020 election.

Further, some legislatures are demanding that ballots come in with one or two witness signatures, or even a notarization. This represents an insurmountable burden to many voters, which seems to be the point.

And now the Trump administration is acting as though it wants to eliminate the U.S. Postal Service, which would make it virtually impossible to get ballots out and back, something President Donald Trump appears to desire. He's claimed that with expanded early voting and voting by mail, "you'd never have another Republican elected in this country again."

Millions of Americans rely on mailboxes that might disappear with the postal service. Private delivery operations like UPS and FedEx are sure to be exceedingly expensive, and unlikely to serve rural areas, Native American reservations or college campuses.

The Brennan Center estimates voting by mail could hike the cost of our national election from $2 billion in 2016 to about $4 billion in 2020. GOP Senate leadership is blocking federal provision of that money, creating a void that state and local governments may be unable or unwilling to fill, an outcome Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) seems to relish.

Yet a vote by mail remains the most sensible option. According to election protection expert John Brakey, about 80% of the nation's precincts now have ballot imaging machines which should be able to handle the vote counts quickly, while still preserving the actual paper ballots for inevitable challenges.

Some voting stations will still be necessary for voters with handicaps, and for those wishing to newly register or re-register if they've been removed from the voter rolls for any reason. And vigilance will be needed by all to guarantee that the system works right.

By HARVEY WASSERMAN
Tribune News Service

Harvey Wasserman wrote The People's Spiral of U.S. History (www.solartopia.org).This column was produced for the Progressive Media Project, which is run by The Progressive *magazine, and distributed by Tribune News Service.*

In 2018, after filling out the ballot I got in the mail in California, I walked it into my Los Angeles neighborhood voting station on the Sunday before election Tuesday. Gracious poll workers made sure I knew my ballot would be treated with the respect it deserved.

You should settle for no less. In 2016, the U.S. had 116,990 voting stations, each with its own quirks, shortcomings, and potential for corruption. A simplified mail-in, paper-based system would represent a great standardized leap forward.

But the devil will be in the details. Americans hoping for a clean, fair, and reliable vote count this fall must pay attention to how their state and local officials intend to handle this election. It is the job of us all to protect this fundamental right.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To our Micronesian family

We would like to thank you all for your heartfelt compassion and kindness. The past several months have been very difficult for our family. My beloved wife, Irene, has prolonged health setbacks and I have recently been diagnosed with advanced cancer. We have been lifted up time and again by the well wishes and prayers from family and friends from Saipan and Micronesia. While facing these serious health challenges, we are humbled by this outpouring of love and concern.

Please know that Irene and I as well as our children will always be grateful for your prayers. We are incredibly blessed to have had so many wonderful friends during our 40 years living in Micronesia.

Being a long-time resident, I still follow the local news and keep in touch with dear friends on Saipan. My heart goes out to everyone that is struggling as we face challenging times with this pandemic. We all will certainly endure this challenge and come back stronger than ever.

Biba Marianas!

With deep appreciation and love,

The Facey Family
Jerry, Irene, John Paul, Jerene and Jeanette
Gilbert, Arizona

PANDEMIC

From Page 8

Please don't tell me to stay safe. I don't wish to be rude, but bleating "stay safe" at me is infuriating. I won't tell you to stay safe. You know why?

Because I have faith you are a rational person who can modify your behavior. And I hope you have faith that I'm not someone who Just Wants People to Die.

No one has ever been safe, except perhaps in a Hallmark card. Speaking of which, if you really want a coronavirus refrigerator magnet cliché, how about this?

End Coronavirus Fear Porn Now.

Turn off the TV news.

And seek balance.